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Fifty-fifth session

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Thursday, 14 December 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Ionatana Ionatana, late Prime Minister of Tuvalu

The President: Before we take up the items on our agenda, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late Prime Minister of Tuvalu, His Excellency Mr. Ionatana Ionatana, who passed away on 8 December 2000.

It was only in September this year that the General Assembly heard his statement on the occasion of the admission of Tuvalu as the one hundred eighty-ninth Member State of the United Nations.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Tuvalu and to the bereaved family of Mr. Ionatana Ionatana.

I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Ionatana Ionatana.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

Agenda item 182

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/55/L.56/Rev.1)

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1.

I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Jin Yongjian (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): Before action is taken on draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1, I should like to inform members that the draft resolution, inter alia, calls for an integrated, coordinated, comprehensive and balanced approach in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. It calls upon all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to be involved in the follow-up to the Summit. It invites specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen and adjust their activities, programmes and medium-term strategies as appropriate to take into account the follow-up to the Summit. And it requests the appropriate bodies to consider urgently how the implementation of the Declaration should relate to the biennium budget process and medium-term plan.

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1, the Secretary-General would ensure system-wide coordination to assist with the implementation of the Declaration and would identify, within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, innovative ways of enhancing cooperation and coherence throughout the United Nations system. In this context, he would request the appropriate bodies of the relevant United Nations system to consider how the implementation of

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the Declaration should relate to the biennium budget process and the medium-term plan.

The outcome of consultations with organizations within the United Nations system would be reported to the General Assembly in the context of the annual and the quinquennial reports called for in paragraphs 18 and 19 of draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1, which would be prepared by the Office of the Secretary-General.

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1, no additional resource requirements are currently anticipated to arise in the biennium 2000-2001. Should any additional requirements be later identified, these would be reported to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly in the context of its consideration of the agenda items related to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and for the biennium 2002-2003.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.56/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/162).

The President: We have just adopted the draft resolution on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. The consensus would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of all delegations. I believe that the membership has shown that the Millennium Summit has indeed created a momentum and new spirit of political will that will help us to achieve the goals set in the Declaration.

I should like to thank once again all delegations for their flexibility. I think that through this kind of consensus-building and teamwork we can achieve progress on many issues, and I look forward to continuing to work with delegations on the follow-up to the Summit.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 182.

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Draft resolution A/55/L.64

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/55/649)

Draft resolutions (A/55/L.38/Rev.1, A/55/L.54)

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Draft resolutions (A/55/L.35/Rev.1, A/55/L.36, A/55/L.53, A/55/L.55/Rev.1, A/55/L.57, A/55/L.59, A/55/L.60, A/55/L.61, A/55/L.65, A/55/L.66)

(c) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Draft resolution (A/55/L.63)

The President: I should like to remind the Assembly that the debate on agenda item 20 and its sub-items (a) to (c) was held at the 72nd plenary meeting, on 27 November 2000.

In connection with draft resolution A/55/L.63, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to two technical errors.

The original languages should include English and French instead of only English;

In operative paragraph 11, after the words "29 April 1994", the word "and" should be replaced by a comma.

I now give the floor to the representative of France to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.64.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the European Union and all the sponsors, I have the honour to present the draft resolution entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel", contained in document A/55/L.64.

May I first of all inform the Assembly that the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Guyana, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Togo.

Allow me, in response to the wishes of all the Members of the United Nations who have asked me to do so, to repeat our strong appreciation for the report that the Secretary-General has submitted to the Assembly together with the recommendations he deems necessary. Indeed, it is his responsibility to ensure the security of United Nations staff and associated personnel, and the provisions adopted in this respect at Headquarters and in the field can also benefit humanitarian personnel in general.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for the task he is undertaking, but this is also part of our responsibility as Member States. It is with this in mind that the European Union and the sponsors of the draft resolution have pursued this initiative.

We welcome the spirit of cooperation, understanding and consensus shown by all delegations throughout this work, which allowed us to reach a fully satisfactory result in keeping with our duties.

The aim was, first, to pay tribute to the personnel, whoever they may be, and to express our firm condemnation of any actions carried out against them in the exercise of their functions. Such actions are unacceptable, and it is the primary responsibility of the State concerned to prevent them, in accordance with international humanitarian law, and also to bring their authors to justice, especially by adopting the necessary legislation, as required by the text of the draft resolution submitted this year to the Assembly.

Allow me to take this opportunity also to remember all those who have lost their lives in humanitarian service or in the service of the United Nations, as sadly referred to in the report of the Secretary-General, and to hope that the draft resolution we are about to adopt will strengthen the security they need in order to be able to fulfil their missions.

Among the elements introduced this year, we should mention the appeal to all States to promote a climate of respect for all United Nations and humanitarian personnel. The text also emphasizes the need to ensure adequate training before deploying field personnel who are at risk, as well as to provide the Secretary-General with the necessary means for this purpose for personnel under his authority.

Moreover, the General Assembly wishes to confirm the need for a full-time Security Coordinator, as was already emphasized in a previous resolution, and the need to strengthen his Office and the current United Nations security system. We emphasize that these intentions should be put into effect quickly and translated into decisions to be adopted by the relevant organs in response to these requests, on the basis of the Secretary-General's recommendations.

Furthermore, note is taken of the Secretary-General's report on expanding the scope of implementation of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and it is proposed that the General Assembly refer the comprehensive consideration of this matter to the Sixth Committee as a specific agenda item of the fifty-sixth session.

In conclusion, allow me to make a positive correction to the draft resolution before us in document A/55/L.64. In the sixteenth preambular paragraph it is stated that the number of States parties to the 1994 Convention is 45; it is now 46, and that is the figure that should be recorded as the exact number at the time of adoption. We welcome this development, and we hope that this draft resolution, on a subject that should mobilize us all, will be able to be adopted by consensus.

In this context, the European Union has noted with optimism the commitment shown by Member States to continue to strengthen texts on this subject in the future, as the situation requires. The European Union reaffirms its gratitude, in particular to the sponsors, and its appreciation for the support and cooperation shown by all delegations that actively participated in the negotiations on this important question.

The President: I call on the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.38/Rev.1.

Mr. Osio (Nigeria): Thank you, Mr. President, for the honour of introducing draft resolution A/55/L.38/Rev.1, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development", on behalf of its original sponsors, the Group of 77 and China, and Mexico.

Nigeria feels further honoured by the opportunity we were given to facilitate the informal formal consultations between the original sponsors and other partners — including the European Union, the Japan, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand group (JUSCANZ) and the Russian Federation — some of which have since indicated interest in joining the list of sponsors. The list, we are confident, will keep growing. Why will the list keep growing? The answer is not far-fetched: the negotiations were very frank, and flexibility was mutual, leading to consensus.

Natural disasters are neither people-friendly nor always country-specific. Thousands of lives and much property, as well as means of livelihood, are always lost in their wake, at a very high cost. That these events happen in developing countries, where development problems are enormous, is noteworthy. Also noteworthy is the fact that the primary responsibility for the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance lies within each developing country's territory. These occurrences are also important because they reverse all gains made through the development efforts of developing countries. Therefore, the need for international cooperation cannot be overemphasized.

In the face of declining official development assistance flows and of the external debt burden, all huge problems of development that militate against the efforts of developing countries to initiate preparedness, even efforts to mitigate disasters, have to be very seriously considered in order to augment the efforts of developing countries.

We have discovered — and this is the truth — that natural disasters are one factor that joins humanity in common agreement. Natural disasters are a great cause of need, and humanity must be united when it comes to need.

It is on this basis that we have decided that there is a need for at least a partnership among Governments of affected countries, relevant humanitarian organizations and specialized agencies to promote training in, access to and the use of technologies, to strengthen preparedness for and response to natural disasters and to enhance the transfer of current technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on concessional and preferential terms, as may be mutually agreed.

The Assembly has before it a draft resolution that enjoys consensus its 22 operative paragraphs, which have spelled out what needs to be done in the hope of having proper guidance from the guiding principles and from the Secretary-General's report, which we hope will guide our future endeavours in this regard.

Let me thank all those who took part in the negotiations for their willingness and flexibility, and particularly those who are going to join the list of sponsors.

The President: I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.54.

Mr. Norström (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of its sponsors, the draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", contained in document A/55/L.54. Since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Bulgaria, Chile, Georgia and Guatemala.

The draft resolution was discussed in informal consultations on 22 November. Valuable proposals were made for the improvement of the text, and agreement was reached on all paragraphs. My delegation is grateful for the contributions made by other delegations, and would like to thank the other sponsors and other delegations for the good spirit of cooperation and partnership in which the consultations were held.

By this draft resolution, the General Assembly would recall its previous resolutions on the topic, and those of the Economic and Social Council. It would take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/82); welcome the progress made by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations; and note the efforts made by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to implement recommendations set forth in previous agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council.

The General Assembly would welcome the holding of the third humanitarian affairs segment of the

Economic and Social Council last summer, and would invite the Council to further enhance the segment in future sessions. It would call upon relevant actors to cooperate to ensure the implementation of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions of recent years.

Finally, the General Assembly would request Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the 2001 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, on progress made in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

Let me add that we have noted the submission by the Secretary-General of a note concerning the enhancement of the functioning and utilization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund pursuant to previous requests by the General Assembly. We look forward to considering the note at the next session.

My delegation and the other sponsors hope that the draft resolution contained in document A/55/L.54 can be adopted by consensus.

The President: I now call on the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, who will speak on behalf of the Caribbean Community, to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.35/Rev.1.

Mr. Lewis (Antigua and Barbuda): As the President said, I am speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.35/Rev.1, entitled "Emergency assistance to Belize". As listed in that document, the sponsors of the text are Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Mexico, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and my own country, Antigua and Barbuda. To that list I should like to add the following countries: Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Malta, Nicaragua, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Venezuela.

In speaking of this draft resolution, one is speaking, in effect, of the perilous conditions that exist in the Caribbean today — and by the Caribbean I am not speaking only about the Caribbean islands but also about the coastal areas of the continent. Last year, for example, Venezuela suffered severe floods. And, of course, it is often overlooked that, in the Gulf, hurricanes usually batter various parts of Mexico. We are subject to a number of natural disasters which we can clearly see are connected to sea-level rise or to the greenhouse gases that are certainly affecting us. We see these effects in the rise of the level of the sea and the denuding of our coastal areas, which is actually affecting our countries' ability to maintain their standards of living and quality of life, because so many depend so heavily on tourism. Some countries are now finding that beaches of which they were once so proud are no longer desirable areas in which foreigners would choose to bathe.

We are in addition finding something that is amply brought out by what happened to Belize: whereas we could once speak about the countries that lay within a hurricane belt, that is no longer true. A hurricane went as far south as Suriname this year, and caught by surprise people who thought themselves safe from the perils faced by their Caribbean neighbours. Even though Belize has, technically, experienced hurricanes in the past, it was not expecting anything of this magnitude. Even today, areas of Belize are still under water because of what hurricane Keith did.

That is why it is so important that the United Nations should understand the problems, in terms of natural disasters, not only of Belize but of the entire Caribbean region. It is not hurricanes alone. From my island, Antigua, it is lovely to gaze to the south and see the volcanic eruptions on Montserrat. But in reality, they are causing so many problems for the beleaguered people of that lovely emerald island. In addition, we have, off Grenada, an undersea volcano known as Kick 'em Jenny, which four or five years ago erupted some four times in one year.

Thus, we are plagued by all these natural disasters. But we have endeavoured to help ourselves. When these disasters occur, the Governments of the countries immediately make offers to the areas in question. This is one area where our military personnel are used very effectively. Our military personnel are used mainly for rehabilitation, since we do not have that many occasions on which they must engage in actual combat. Along with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, to which we all contribute, there is a spirit of togetherness which causes us to act immediately when one of our brotherly

or sisterly countries is affected. We were surprised this year that Suriname and Belize — the latter being the subject of this particular draft resolution — suffered so much. That is why we wanted the draft resolution to request the Secretary-General to give us a report. In the past, such reports have enabled us to draw lessons from them. When people visit some of our territories now, they wonder what it is about the people who live there — what it is about their resilience — that enables them to continue with their everyday ways, means and forms of living, and not be mentally or psychologically affected by these constant disasters. One Caribbean country that did not experience a hurricane between 1950 and 1989 has experienced six within the past five years.

That is the type of peril with which the inhabitants of the Caribbean countries live. That is why we are asking the General Assembly to demonstrate the togetherness and humanity of this glorious Organization and institution in adopting this draft resolution by consensus. It will send a clear message to all peoples, particularly, at this time, the people of Belize, that they have friends around the globe who not only empathize with them but are willing to come to their assistance through the parliament of parliaments.

I urge that this draft resolution be adopted by consensus.

The President: I call on the representative of Madagascar to introduce draft resolutions A/55/L.36, A/55/L.53, A/55/L.55/Rev.1 and A/55/L.66.

Mr. Bakoniarivo (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): Under agenda item 20 (b), I have the honour of introducing four draft resolutions relating to the following four countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Somalia and Liberia. I am speaking on behalf of all the sponsors mentioned in the draft resolutions, which we shall consider one after the other.

With regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the draft resolution, entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo", is contained in document A/55/L.36. In addition to the countries mentioned in that document, the following countries have become sponsors: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Madagascar, Namibia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, the United States of America and Zimbabwe.

The issue of special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been on the General Assembly's agenda since 1997 because of the political crisis in that country. The United Nations responded favourably by creating a trust fund, which was set up during the Meeting of Friends of the Congo in December 1997. Despite the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to facilitate recovery, the people there continue to suffer, with admirable courage, the vicissitudes of a long political transition process that is having a devastating effect on economic structures, as well as the ravages of two successive armed conflicts that have hampered the speedy reconstruction of the country and of the social infrastructure, which has been hard hit by the years of crises. The Democratic Republic of the Congo therefore remains a poor and heavily indebted country.

We are greatly obliged to the Secretariat of the United Nations for ensuring that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has remained among its top priorities. Indeed, throughout this year, the United Nations Development Programme office in Kinshasa, acting as the coordinator of United Nations system-wide activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has been closely involved in the design, development, coordination and implementation of various development projects undertaken in the context of the fight against poverty.

The report of the Secretary-General, contained in document A/55/319, describes very aptly the current situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the tireless efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and regional leaders for their tireless efforts aimed at achieving peace and development for the courageous people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I fervently hope that the members of the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

With regard to Mozambique, the draft resolution, entitled " Assistance to Mozambique" , is contained in document A/55/L.53. I am speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution. In addition to those countries mentioned in the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Belgium, Chile, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, the United Kingdom of

Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Since 1976, the General Assembly has regularly adopted a resolution on assistance to Mozambique as part of the international community's efforts to come to the assistance of that country and its people as they try to meet their reconstruction and development needs. These resolutions have provided a juridical and political framework for the bilateral and multilateral cooperation and assistance given to Mozambique, which has contributed to meeting the essential needs of the people and to the implementation of a development programme. With the considerable backing of the international community, in the 1990s Mozambique was on its way to achieving economic growth and sustainable development, as eloquently shown by the Secretary-General's report on assistance to Mozambique, contained in document A/55/317.

Nonetheless, at the beginning of this year, Mozambique was once again devastated by cyclones and floods that took a tragic toll in human life, property and infrastructure. This natural disaster, with its adverse impact on the economic, social and humanitarian situation in the country, was widely reported internationally.

The Mozambican Government is asking for assistance from the international community in general and the United Nations in particular so as to help it get a grip on this humanitarian disaster and its consequences. Recently, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/96 L by consensus, which set up the appropriate framework for delivering international humanitarian assistance to Mozambique. We want to thank the international community for its support and solidarity during these trying times.

The considerable impact of the floods will be felt for several years to come in Mozambique. The natural disaster compromised the remarkable economic growth and sustainable development that Mozambique had experienced. Beyond that, this disaster is sapping the nation's long-term economic development programme, notwithstanding the praiseworthy efforts of the Government and the valiant people of that country.

The draft resolution being submitted to the General Assembly today is designed to mobilize humanitarian assistance for the post-crisis reconstruction and recovery programme, as well as international support for long-term development and national reconstruction. We hope that, by adopting this draft resolution by consensus, the international community will renew its commitment to coming to the aid of Mozambique as it seeks to build on its achievements in the framework of its development programme.

Turning to Somalia, we have before us a draft resolution entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia", document A/55/L.55/Rev.1, dated 7 December 2000. I am speaking on behalf of the sponsors listed in the draft resolution, to which Eritrea and Ireland should be added. I would say that this draft resolution is similar to other such resolutions adopted recently. However, this draft resolution contains some new paragraphs because of a new and highly positive development in the political situation in Somalia following the Somali National Reconciliation Conference, held in Arta, the Republic of Djibouti, from May to September 2000, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and organized and facilitated by the Government of Djibouti. The Conference led to the adoption of a transitional three-yea charter involving the establishment of a transitional national parliament and the formation of a transitional Government. Nonetheless, certain political groups within Somalia have remained outside the Arta process, thus constituting a challenge yet to be met. We very much appreciate the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/55/415. It should be updated to reflect these political developments in Somalia.

Here in the Assembly, we want to thank all the States, United Nations bodies and organizations, other international institutions and international, regional and non-governmental organizations that have helped Somalia. The disastrous consequences of the prolonged socio-economic and political crisis endured by Somalia cannot possibly be resolved in a short time. They will be felt for a number of years to come.

The draft resolution I am introducing to the Assembly is designed to support the transitional Somali Government in its actions to achieve comprehensive national reconciliation in the context of the Arta process, because the restoration of peace will be the only way for the country to work calmly to achieve national reconstruction and development. This can happen after the establishment of appropriate civilian institutions within a democratic system. We hope that, by adopting this draft resolution, the international

community, through the General Assembly, will reaffirm its determination to help Somalia achieve reconstruction and recovery.

On the subject of Liberia, draft resolution A/55/L.66 is entitled "Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia". Again, I am speaking on behalf of the sponsors listed in that document. Through the decisive efforts for cooperation and peacemaking on the part of the Economic Community of West African States, the United Nations and the OAU, the people of Liberia have emerged from seven years of devastating civil war, and democratic elections were held in June 1997.

During the conflict and the post-war period, many countries that were friends of Liberia sponsored draft resolutions year after year to support the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Liberia. Obviously, Liberia continues to face daunting challenges in trying to rebuild its infrastructure and reactivate its economy. Despite the programmes initiated by the Government designed to achieve reconciliation and reconstruction, the pace of development has been less than satisfactory, and international assistance for the country's reconstruction programme has declined. We fully agree with the Secretary-General's statement in his report of 26 June 2000, contained in document A/55/90, that it is absolutely essential for the international community at large and for the chief donors in particular to become more aware of the problems Liberia and the subregion are facing in the post-conflict period.

In addition to all this, the people of Liberia need subregional stability as a basis for sustained international support for Liberia's development efforts.

We, the sponsors of this draft resolution, express our gratitude to all the donor countries, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the European Union, the Bretton Woods institutions and non-governmental organizations for their participation in a joint mission held in Monrovia from 15 to 19 November 1999 to assess the National Reconstruction Programme and the use of donor funds committed at the 1998 Paris Donors' Conference for the reconstruction of Liberia. We ask those that have not yet honoured their pledges to do so.

We thank the Secretary-General for his continuing efforts to mobilize international assistance for the development and reconstruction of Liberia.

We call on all countries and intergovernmental organizations to provide assistance to facilitate the implementation of peace-building efforts in post-war Liberia.

Like past resolutions, the draft resolution before us is a consensus document. I ask that the General Assembly adopt it without a vote.

That concludes my introduction of the four draft resolutions submitted to General Assembly for adoption without a vote.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.57.

Mr. Isakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As it did last year, the Russian Federation has the honour once again this year to introduce to the General Assembly the draft resolution on humanitarian assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has undergone radical changes in the last year. At the same time, however, the humanitarian problems there are no less acute. As the report of the Secretary-General on this issue (A/55/416) rightly points out, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will face considerable humanitarian problems in the near future, and they may yet be magnified.

Yugoslavia continues to be a transit point for a very large number of refugees and internally displaced persons in Europe, comprising over 700,000 persons whose socio-economic situation is deteriorating. Democratic changes are taking place against the backdrop of a catastrophic economic situation in the country and the deterioration of its social infrastructure. The situation with regard to energy, food supplies and finances is especially dire. In other words, the humanitarian situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia calls for continued — and in most cases increased — humanitarian assistance, in particular given the approach of winter.

It is for that reason that this draft resolution calls for the international community to render emergency humanitarian relief to the people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, especially during the coming winter months. The United Nations — which, along with its specialized agencies and, in particular, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has a special role to play in this regard — is called

upon to strengthen coordination in the granting of humanitarian assistance, especially by improving the consolidated inter-agency appeals mechanism. In that connection, the draft resolution calls on the Secretary-General to continue efforts to mobilize timely humanitarian assistance to Yugoslavia.

An important element of the draft resolution is the appeal it makes to the international community to support the Government of Yugoslavia in its efforts to ensure the transition from emergency humanitarian assistance to the long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of the country. The role of the United Nations is also important in this regard. The Organization is requested to continue its efforts to evaluate the humanitarian needs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to establish effective links between emergency relief and longer-term assistance to Yugoslavia.

The draft resolution gives great attention to seeking long-term solutions to the problems of refugees, especially through voluntary repatriation and reintegration. In this context, the draft resolution stresses the importance of developing regional cooperation to seek solutions in order to improve the difficult situation of refugees.

The Russian Federation is introducing this draft resolution on behalf of a large number of sponsors. Draft resolution A/55/L.57 lists 31 States. In addition to the Russian Federation and Yugoslavia, countries of the European Union, of the Commonwealth of Independent States and of South-East Europe, as well as a host of other States that value the ideas contained in the draft resolution, are also sponsors. I wish to note with satisfaction that since the draft resolution was issued as an official document, Austria, Cuba, India, Japan and the United States of America have also become sponsors of the draft resolution. We wish to thank the sponsors for their support of our initiative, and to express our gratitude to other delegations for their cooperation and constructive contributions towards agreement on the draft resolution.

We are confident that the General Assembly's adoption of this draft resolution will truly help accelerate the coordination of humanitarian assistance and the launching of broad international cooperation for the recovery and development of the economy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo and the entire Balkan region.

The President: Before giving the floor to the representative of Ukraine to introduce draft resolutions A/55/L.59 and A/55/L.60, I should like to make a few remarks on the closure on the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on 15 December 2000.

The tragedy at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, almost 15 years ago, affected almost the entire territory of Europe — but most of all Ukraine and the neighbouring areas of Belarus and the Russian Federation — and caused long-lasting, complex problems. The human suffering caused by the accident cannot be measured, and its environmental impact was partly irreversible. The Chernobyl accident was a major global technological catastrophe, and an eye-opener in many respects.

We will soon take action on draft resolution A/55/L.60, on the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. We all welcome the decision by the Government of Ukraine to close the Chernobyl plant tomorrow, 15 December 2000. By doing so, Ukraine is acting pursuant to its commitments under the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Ottawa in 1995.

The draft resolution before us invites the international community to continue to provide support to the Government and the people of Ukraine and other affected States. It is my sincere hope that the adoption of this draft resolution, in connection with the closure of the plant, will give new impetus to the concerted efforts by the United Nations system aimed at mitigating and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Ukraine to introduce draft resolutions A/55/L.59 and A/55/L.60.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): I would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your high assessment of the significance of the decision of Ukraine to close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the draft resolution entitled "Economic assistance to the Eastern European States affected by the developments in the Balkans", contained in document A/55/L.59. I am pleased to announce that this draft resolution has been sponsored by the following delegations: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary,

Romania, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United States of America and Yugoslavia.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all the sponsors and to all delegations whose constructive participation in the informal consultations resulted in the consensus text of this draft resolution.

The purpose of the present draft, which is based on the text of the consensus resolution of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and updated to reflect the new developments, is clear and apparent: to help the Eastern European States affected by the developments in the Balkan region to solve their special economic problems, especially in the sphere of regional trade and economic relations and particularly as related to the navigation on the Danube river.

To create favourable conditions for solving these problems, the draft resolution invites all States and relevant international organizations to assist the affected States in their efforts for economic recovery, development and economic cooperation in the region and beyond. It emphasizes the importance of a well-coordinated and timely donor response to the external funding requirements of the process of economic reconstruction, reform and development in the Balkans, as well as of financial support to other affected countries of Eastern Europe.

The draft welcomes the democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and their positive effects on peace, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe.

Let me express my sincere hope that this draft will gain the broadest possible support and will be adopted by consensus.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce another draft resolution, which has a special meaning for my country. The draft resolution is entitled "Closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant" and is contained in the document A/55/L.60.

We would like to thank all delegations for the cooperative approach they demonstrated in the course of consultations, which allowed for the development of a consensus draft resolution. We are particularly grateful to the sponsors of the draft. I have the pleasure to inform the General Assembly that since document A/55/L.60 was issued, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors of the draft: Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uzbekistan.

Tomorrow the world will be witnessing an event whose historical significance has won wide international recognition. Its significance was reaffirmed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his statement yesterday and by the President of the General Assembly in today's statement.

On 15 December Ukraine will close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. By taking this important step, my country is fulfilling its commitments under the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Ottawa in 1995 and makes a significant, substantial contribution towards achieving global nuclear safety. It was a difficult decision for my country, both in view of the condition of the national economy, especially of the energy sector, and in view of the social consequences of the power plant's closure for the personnel of the power plant and for people whose lives are closely linked to the Chernobyl nuclear power station. Against this background, it is particularly important that the draft resolution sends a strong message of the international community's support for Ukraine's historic decision.

To address the problems arising from the closure of the power plant, Ukraine needs substantial resources, which, unfortunately, it is incapable of mobilizing alone. The international community has already done a great deal to assist Ukraine in mitigating and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, and we sincerely appreciate its assistance. At the same time, the present draft underlines the importance of continued international assistance to Ukraine to cope with the range of newly emerging economic and social problems stemming from the closure of the Chernobyl plant.

The problems associated with the nuclear plant's closure are not only a Ukrainian internal issue, or an issue for the affected countries. We believe it is a matter deserving global attention. Bearing the main burden of these challenges, Ukraine relies on the understanding and support of the international community.

The closure of the power plant is not the conclusion of the Chernobyl item on the global agenda; it is, rather, the beginning of a qualitatively new stage in addressing the Chernobyl-related problems. The

draft resolution reflects the importance the international community attaches to meeting this challenge.

We share the view expressed by President Holkeri in this morning's statement that the adoption of the draft resolution will give new impetus to the concerted efforts of the United Nations system to mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.

Let me express my sincere hope that draft resolution A/55/L.60 will gain the broadest possible support and will be adopted by consensus.

The President: I now call on the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.61.

Mr. Zaki (Egypt): The Egyptian delegation is pleased to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.61, entitled "Special emergency economic assistance to the Comoros", on behalf of its sponsors — Afghanistan, Algeria, the Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen — in addition to Madagascar, Senegal and Burkina Faso.

In its preambular part, the draft resolution refers to General Assembly resolutions 51/30 F of 13 December 1996 and 53/1 F of 16 November 1998 on special emergency economic assistance to the Comoros and to the report of the Secretary-General on that subject, noting in particular the suggestion of the Secretary-General that resolution 53/1 F should be referred to the Economic and Social Council with a view to initiating a reconstruction and rehabilitation programme so as to lay the groundwork for national economic recovery on a sound basis.

By the first operative paragraph, the General Assembly would take note *with satisfaction* the report of the Secretary-General on emergency economic assistance to the Comoros. By the second operative paragraph, the Assembly would request the Economic and Social Council to consider General Assembly resolution 53/1 F with a view to initiating a reconstruction and rehabilitation programme so as to lay the groundwork for national economic recovery on a sound basis. By the third operative paragraph, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution in the Economic and Social Council.

The delegation of Egypt, on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.61, looks forward to the support of all member States and to the adoption by consensus of the draft, as was done for the previous two resolutions on the same subject.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.65.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for East Timor", on behalf of the 29 sponsors listed in document A/55/L.65.

Allow me to announce that the delegations of Angola, Argentina, Austria, Benin, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Colombia, Cyprus, Greece, Nauru, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia and Uganda have also expressed the wish to co-sponsor this draft resolution.

This draft resolution addresses the humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development needs of East Timor. It calls for continued support by the international community to alleviate the humanitarian assistance requirements of East Timor and stresses the urgent need for sustained and enhanced efforts to effectively and comprehensively resolve the question of East Timorese refugees.

The issue of humanitarian relief is seen in the broader context of the development and reconstruction needs of East Timor in its transition to independence. This draft resolution puts strong emphasis on the need for an enhanced ownership and participation of the East Timorese in all sectors, as well as on capacity-building, and encourages international assistance in such areas as agriculture, infrastructure, health and education.

The preambular part contains references to relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions; to the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor and to its mandate; to the timely international response to the humanitarian crisis; and to progress achieved in alleviating the humanitarian assistance needs of East Timor. It welcomes the efforts made in this area, recognizes the significant challenges to be faced and emphasizes the need for continued support for the implementation of resettlement and repatriation programmes and for the transition from relief to

rehabilitation and development in preparation for independence.

In its operative part, this draft resolution contains a general encouragement to the international community and United Nations agencies to continue to collaborate to address the remaining humanitarian relief needs and to support the transition to independence. It refers to the participation of the East Timorese in all the phases of reconstruction and to the Donor Meetings in Tokyo, Lisbon and Brussels. A strong emphasis is placed on the need to respond to the issues of food security and agriculture, infrastructure, health services and primary schools in East Timor. It also contains clear references to the need for sustained and enhanced efforts to overcome the question of East Timorese refugees, including their registration, repatriation and resettlement, as well as to the need for a safe and secure working environment in the refugee camps.

Finally, the draft resolution contains a recommendation that the United Nations continue to address the humanitarian, rehabilitation and development needs of East Timor and requests that the Secretary-General prepare a report on the issue for the consideration of the General Assembly at its next session.

I would like to request that the following corrections be made in document A/55/L.65 to reflect the agreed text that was submitted to the Secretariat.

In the second line of operative paragraph 5, after the words "efforts aimed at" and before the words "in, the social, economic and administrative infrastructure", the current language should be replaced by the following phrase: "the enhanced ownership and participation of the eastern Timorese, known as 'Timorization', in East Timor, in". With this correction, operative paragraph 5 will read as follows:

> "*Urges* United Nations organizations, the international community and non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts aimed at the enhanced ownership and participation of the eastern Timorese, known as 'Timorization', in East Timor, in the social, economic and administrative infrastructure and, in this regard, stresses the need for capacity-building, inter alia, in such areas as education, health, agriculture and rural development, the judiciary, governance and public administration, security and law and order;".

In line 5 of operative paragraph 13, a comma should be inserted after the words "those refugees" in order for the phrase to read:

> "*Stresses* the urgent need for sustained and enhanced efforts by the Government of Indonesia, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor and the international community to effectively and comprehensively resolve the question of the East Timorese refugees by the repatriation or resettlement of all those refugees, in conditions of safety and security at all stages, and based on their voluntary decisions, through the efforts of the Government of Indonesia to guarantee effective security in the West Timor camps, by the promotion of a credible and internationally observed registration process, and by the promotion and support of reconciliation among all East Timorese;".

It is our hope that, like last year, when this issue was first taken up, the draft resolution entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for East Timor" will be adopted without a vote by the General Assembly.

The President: I call on the representative of France, on behalf of the European Union, to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.63.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour, on behalf of the European Union and the other sponsors, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", contained in document A/55/L.63. Since its publication, the following States have joined as sponsors of this draft resolution: Cyprus, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Togo.

In the current tragic circumstances, the sponsors of this draft resolution would like to stress the particular importance of providing assistance to the Palestinian people.

Through this draft resolution, the General Assembly expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen. The Assembly also expresses its appreciation to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-

governmental organizations for their continuous efforts and assistance to the Palestinian people. This text welcomes in particular the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held at Lisbon in June 2000. Such meetings allow for the coordination of international assistance efforts to the Palestinian people.

This effort must continue. That is why the General Assembly calls upon all parties to intensify their assistance in order to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian people, in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority and with an emphasis on setting up institutions and on capacity-building. In this context, it also urges the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people. This text also calls upon Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms.

The text reiterates that, in order for assistance to be effective, it is essential that it reach its destination without obstacles. More generally, free movement of persons and goods must be guaranteed. It is important also that the bilateral Paris Protocol on Economic Relations be implemented, so that, in particular, the tax revenues of the Palestinian Authority can be fully and promptly cleared. The Palestinian Authority must be in position to fully benefit from its financial resources.

In spite of the tragic events in the region, it is the hope of the sponsors that this draft resolution can be adopted by consensus. I wish to thank all parties concerned for the spirit of openness shown during the sometimes difficult negotiation of this text led by the European Union. The adoption without a vote of this substantial draft resolution would represent a positive gesture under the present circumstances. In our view, this gesture would go along the lines of the shared wish for a resumption of the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians.

The President: The Assembly will now take decisions on 11 draft resolutions, under sub-items (a), (b) and (c) of agenda item 20.

The Assembly will take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.38/Rev.1, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development".

Before proceeding to the action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since publication the following countries have become sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Bulgaria, Cuba, Gambia, Gabon, Guatemala, Indonesia, South Africa and Sudan.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.38/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.38/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/163).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.54 is entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations".

Before proceeding to action, I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution the following countries have become sponsors: Belarus, Israel and Ukraine.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.54?

Draft resolution A/55/L.54 was adopted (resolution 55/164).

The President: The Assembly will take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.35/Rev.1, entitled "Emergency assistance to Belize".

Before proceeding to action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since its introduction the following countries have become sponsors of A/55/L.35/Rev.1: Colombia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Netherlands and Portugal.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.35/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.35/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/165).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.36 is entitled "Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo".

Before proceeding to the action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since its publication Zambia has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.36?

Draft resolution A/55/L.36 was adopted (resolution 55/166).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.53 is entitled "Assistance to Mozambique".

Before proceeding to action, I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Austria, Botswana, Canada, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Netherlands, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.53?

Draft resolution A/55/L.53 was adopted (resolution 55/167).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.55/Rev.l is entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia".

Before proceeding to the action on the draft resolution I should like to announce that since its publication Belgium and Djibouti have become sponsors.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.55/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.55/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/168).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.57 is entitled "Humanitarian assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia".

I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution Georgia has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopted draft resolution A/55/L.57?

Draft resolution A/55/L.57 was adopted (resolution 55/169).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.59 is entitled "Economic assistance to the Eastern European States affected by the developments in the Balkans".

Before proceeding to action on the draft resolution I should like to announce that since publication the Republic of Moldova has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopted draft resolution A/55/L.59?

Draft resolution A/55/L.59 was adopted (resolution A/55/170).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.60 is entitled "Closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant".

Since its publication, Kazakhstan, Latvia and Mongolia have become sponsors.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.60?

Draft resolution A/55/L.60 was adopted (resolution A/55/171).

The President: Draft resolution A/55/L.65 is entitled "Assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for East Timor".

Since publication the following countries have joined in sponsoring: Benin, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Colombia, Cyprus, Nauru and Uganda.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.65, as orally revised by the representative of Brazil?

Draft resolution A/55/L.65, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution A/55/172).

The President: The General Assembly will take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.63, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

Since its publication Belarus, Guinea, Monaco, Norway and Slovenia have become sponsors.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.63?

Draft resolution A/55/L.63 was adopted (resolution A/55/173).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I call on the representative of Israel.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): This year, as in years past, Israel has joined the consensus on the resolution entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", and I would like to explain our position in this regard.

Israel is committed to the goal of enhancing the economic growth and welfare of the Palestinian people, which we view as an investment in a better future for the people of the region. This goal has translated to a

primary component of Israeli policy, which includes direct economic assistance to the Palestinians, cooperation on development and a wide variety of other projects that have yielded substantial results on the ground.

We welcome the concerted efforts of Member States, international financial institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to aid in the development efforts. Israel has been fully cooperating with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as with other international organizations, in implementing programmes aimed at improving the living conditions of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

In this respect, it should be pointed out that Israel shares the hope that the United Nations Special Coordinator in these areas can assist in the crucial sphere of economic growth, enrichment and investment in the future. Israel is ready to cooperate with the Special Coordinator in this sphere.

Israel's participation in the consensus on the resolution should not be construed as implying any position regarding the present status of the areas referred to as "occupied territories". Additionally, our support does not carry any implication regarding Israel's position on the permanent status of those territories, which, in accordance with all Palestinian-Israeli agreements, is a matter to be negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians in the framework of the permanent status negotiations, to which we hope to return as soon as possible.

This year, changes were made in the text of the resolution, referring to the free passage of aid and the free movement for persons and goods. I would like to take this opportunity to stress that despite the recent crisis, Israel has continued and even expanded the free flow of humanitarian assistance and food to the areas under Palestinian Authority administration. In addition, the movement of goods and persons through Israel and Israeli-administered areas is restricted only to the extent that such movement impacts directly on security.

Also in this year's text, reference was made in paragraph 11 to the need to continue implementation of the provisions of the interim agreements signed between Israel and the Palestinians. We welcome this addition to the text of the resolution. It reinforces our conviction that the Israel-Palestinian interim agreements continue to remain in force until the achievement of the permanent status agreement between ourselves and the Palestinians, which we hope will occur in the near future. In this regard, I would like to reiterate that Israel fully respects and complies with these agreements, including the provisions on the clearance of Palestinian tax revenues, which have already been transferred in full by Israel to the Palestinian Authority for the monthly periods of January to November of this year.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote after adoption.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) under agenda item 20.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) under agenda item 20?

It was so decided.

The President: It is expected that the Assembly will take action on the other draft resolutions submitted or to be submitted under agenda item 20 and its sub-item (b) next week. Members are aware that sub-item (d) will be taken up next Tuesday, 19 December, in the morning together with item 46.

Agenda item 54

Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the present United States Administration in April 1986

The President: It is my understanding that, after the necessary consultations, consideration of this item may be deferred to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 54.

Agenda item 55

Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and international peace and security

The President: It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 55.

Agenda item 56

Consequences of the Iraqi occupation of and aggression against Kuwait

The President: It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 56.

Agenda item 57

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

The President: It is my understanding that there is no request to consider this item at the present session. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of this item to the fifty-sixth session and to include this item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 57.

Agenda item 58

Launching of global negotiations on international economic cooperation for development

The President: May I take it that it is the Assembly's wish to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 58.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to inform members of the following additions to the programme of work of the General Assembly.

On Tuesday morning, 19 December 2000, the General Assembly, in addition to agenda item 17 (h), "Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences", and agenda items 20 (d) and 46, relating to Afghanistan, will also take up agenda item 49, "The situation in East Timor during its transition to independence".

On Wednesday morning, 20 December, the General Assembly will consider the reports of the Second Committee.

I should now like to remind delegations that we are fast approaching the end of this part of the fifty-fifth session. It is my hope that all outstanding matters for this part of the session concerning plenary items will be dealt with by the General Assembly before the end of next week.

In this connection, there are still a number of outstanding draft resolutions under several plenary items. I would therefore strongly urge members to submit those draft resolutions at the latest by tomorrow, 15 December 2000. Draft resolutions submitted later than tomorrow, especially those that could have programme budget implications, may run the risk of not being acted upon before the end of next week.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.86

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

86th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 19 December 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 17 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(h) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/55/108)

The President: As indicated in document A/55/108, since the terms of office of Argentina, the Bahamas, Belgium, Benin, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Lesotho will expire on 21 December 2000, it is necessary for the President of the General Assembly to appoint, during the current session, seven members to fill the resulting vacancies. The members so appointed will serve for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2001.

After consultations with the Chairmen of the groups of African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, as well as Western European and other States, I have appointed Argentina, Benin, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Peru and Sierra Leone as members of the Committee on Conferences, with effect from 1 January 2001.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 17?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 49

The situation in East Timor during its transition to independence

The President: It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

The President: This concludes our consideration of agenda item 49.

Agenda items 20 (*continued*) **and 46**

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

(d) Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

00-80513 (E)

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/55/348, A/55/393 and A/55/633)

Letter from the Secretary-General (A/55/548)

Draft resolution (A/55/L.62/Rev.1)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/698)

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1.

Mr. Kastrup (Germany): I am pleased to introduce a draft resolution on Afghanistan under items 46 and 20 (d) of the agenda. As in previous years, more than 80 countries participated in the negotiations. I should like to thank them all for their valuable contributions and considerable efforts, which have helped to shape the text that is presented today. I would also like to express my gratitude to all countries that have sponsored this draft resolution.

I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Brazil, Egypt, the Dominican Republic and Peru.

Our intention during the negotiation of the draft resolution was to maintain the consensus it has enjoyed in previous years. However, this year it was particularly difficult to obtain consensus, as countries strongly differed in their assessment of the Secretary-General's report of 20 November 2000 on the situation in Afghanistan.

Germany, for one, fully supports all paragraphs of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. As mediator and facilitator, however, we realized that this year no consensus was possible on a draft resolution which included the full endorsement of the Secretary-General's report. In addition, important sponsors of last year's resolution felt they had to change their position within days. Other important sponsors of last year's resolution seriously considered withdrawing their sponsorship.

Our reluctance to follow the requests of several delegations not to endorse the report was ultimately overcome when Mr. Francesc Vendrell, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, informed us that he strongly favoured consensus. Mr. Vendrell stressed that he needed the cooperation of all countries and parties on the ground. As it has always been our intention to strengthen and support the work of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, his opinion paved the way for consensus. Today we are again in a position to present a draft resolution which sends a strong message to the warring Afghan parties and to all States concerned that it is the will of the international community that peace return to Afghanistan.

I share the view of the Secretary-General that the year 2000 has been an exceptionally difficult year for Afghans. Despite repeated international appeals by the Security Council and the General Assembly not to launch military offensives, both Afghan parties continued fighting. They still seem to believe, against all evidence to the contrary, in a military solution.

Exactly one year ago, I called on both Afghan parties to focus their energies on the search for peace and on the reconstruction of their country. Unfortunately, they did not heed my call. The offensives launched by the Taliban in the summer of this year aggravated the already serious humanitarian and human rights situation. This has led to the massive loss of human lives; refugee flows; harassment; the forcible displacement of innocent civilians, in particular women and children; and the arbitrary detention of civilians.

In view of this grave situation, the draft resolution once again calls upon all Afghan parties to immediately cease all armed hostilities, to renounce the use of force and to engage in a political dialogue under United Nations auspices. With all due caution, we welcome the agreement reached by the Taliban and the United Front on 2 November to enter into a process of dialogue without preconditions in order to bring to an end the Afghan conflict by political means. We wish Mr. Vendrell all success and the good luck he needs to implement this agreement, which is purely procedural in nature and which can only constitute a first step on a long road towards peace.

It is not unknown that the fighting in Afghanistan is prolonged by the foreign military support the Afghan parties receive. On the side of each warring faction there is continued foreign involvement. There is not

only a supply of arms, ammunition and military equipment, but also the presence and involvement of foreign military personnel on the ground. The draft that is being introduced today strongly condemns the continuing foreign military support to the Afghan parties and calls upon all States to take resolute measures to prohibit their military personnel from planning and participating in combat operations in Afghanistan, to immediately withdraw their personnel and to ensure that the supply of ammunition and other war-making materials is halted. I shall not mince words: it is this form of interference by certain Governments in the internal affairs of Afghanistan that enables and encourages both factions to pursue their military aims. Unless this interference is stopped, the current Afghan struggle will continue.

In accordance with previous resolutions on Afghanistan, this draft reiterates that the main responsibility for a peaceful solution to the conflict lies with the Afghan parties. It also reiterates that the United Nations must continue to play the central role in international efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. The United Nations has to facilitate the political process leading towards the goal of national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement in which all parties to the conflict in all segments of Afghan society have to participate.

Germany has always supported the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan with a view to ensuring the Mission's primary role in the United Nations peacekeeping activities in Afghanistan. We hope that these activities will lead to a durable ceasefire and to the formation of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative government. Two years ago the General Assembly's resolution on Afghanistan endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a separate Civil Affairs Unit within the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA). The Unit's primary objective was to deter grave violations of human rights and to promote respect for minimum humanitarian standards in the future. Today we welcome the deployment of UNSMA's Civil Affairs Unit to six cities in Afghanistan. We also welcome the ongoing dialogue on political and human rights issues with high-ranking representatives of local and regional authorities of both Afghan sides.

Germany supports the intention of the Secretary-General to strengthen the political capacity of UNSMA and to increase the number of its military advisers. We also support the activities of groups of interested States, in particular the "six plus two" group, to use their influence in a constructive manner to promote peace in Afghanistan. We welcome the various peace initiatives of non-United Nations actors, including those of various non-warring Afghan parties and independent Afghan personalities, calling for an end to the fighting.

It is indeed a very sad duty to report to the Assembly that, once again, our hopes for an improvement of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan have been in vain. On the contrary, the situation continued to deteriorate in 2000. Twenty-one years of uninterrupted armed conflict have created dismal socio-economic conditions for the large majority of the Afghan population. We are once again distressed to see that this year's summer offensive led to further needless and deliberate destruction of means of livelihood and of infrastructure, thereby creating new flows of refugees and internally displaced persons. In addition, the country is now facing the worst drought in recent history. The effects of the drought are expected to become even more severe in 2001 and will affect about 12 million Afghans, 3 million to 4 million severely. The war, the drought, searing poverty and a dysfunctional economy with mass unemployment, aggravated by a lack of even the most basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, will place Afghanistan at the very bottom of the scale in terms of human development next year.

In this context, please allow me to stress the vital importance of continued humanitarian assistance by the international community for the Afghan population, and the central role that the United Nations and its agencies play in the provision of aid to that country. Germany commends the United Nations for its efforts in Afghanistan, but remains, at the same time, deeply concerned about the conditions under which humanitarian assistance has to be delivered in the country. Though some progress has been made in the past year, acts of interference by the warring parties and restricted access to affected populations remain a serious matter of concern. This draft resolution stresses the importance that the international community attaches to having all the warring parties show greater respect for the rights of all civilians to humanitarian assistance.

Germany is also deeply worried about the continuing threats to the safety and security of

humanitarian personnel in Afghanistan. We strongly condemn recent acts of violence and intimidation against United Nations personnel, in particular the brutal murder of seven Afghan employees of the United Nations-supported mine awareness programme by unidentified gunmen. In this respect, we call upon the Taliban authorities to fully respect and implement the Supplementary Protocol to the Memorandum of Understanding on the security of United Nations personnel.

Unfortunately, this year we again received new reports on the ongoing use of landmines in Afghanistan. We deeply deplore this practice. Germany attaches highest priority to the complete halt of landmine usage. The contamination of large areas by landmines and unexploded ordinance causes unnecessary suffering and constitutes a major hindrance to the recovery and development of Afghanistan and a serious impediment to the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced people.

Germany remains deeply concerned about the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, notably in areas under control of the Taliban. Gender discrimination continues to be systematically applied. In this respect, we condemn the decree issued in July by the Taliban authorities restricting the employment of women by the United Nations, with the exception of the health sector. Though it has not been fully implemented, this draft resolution strongly rejects the decree on a matter of principle. The draft resolution also states very clearly that the international community does not accept the exclusion of women and girls from public life. At the same time, we note reports by the United Nations organizations in Afghanistan that some progress was made concerning the access of women and girls to education and health care. The situation, however, is far from satisfactory. We therefore encourage all parties, in particular the Taliban, to make further steps towards granting women their internationally guaranteed basic rights.

The conflict in Afghanistan has international implications for the neighbouring countries, as well as far beyond the region. Let me summarize the messages of this draft resolution.

First, we ask both Afghan factions to stop fighting immediately and to engage in a political dialogue without delay and preconditions.

Secondly, we ask all countries involved in the conflict to stop their military support to all sides to the conflict.

Thirdly, we ask all Afghan factions to stop the gross violations of human rights, in particular with regard to women and girls.

Fourthly, the continuing illegal drug activities in Afghanistan and the trafficking of illegal drugs from Afghanistan, often in association with arms trafficking and other criminal activities, present a substantial threat to neighbouring countries and have serious negative implications in other parts of the world. This draft therefore welcomes the adoption of a Regional Action Plan by the "six plus two" group aimed at eliminating illicit drug production in and drug trafficking from Afghanistan and strongly calls upon all Afghan parties to halt all illegal drug activities.

Fifthly, Afghan territory continues to be used to shelter and train terrorists. The Taliban continue to provide a safe haven to international terrorists, including Usama bin Laden. They also continue to allow him and others associated with him to operate a network of terrorist training camps and to use Afghanistan as the base from which to sponsor international terrorist operations. Germany deplores the Taliban's failure to comply with Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) one year after its adoption. Today, the Security Council is about to impose tighter sanctions against the Taliban. Following this line, the draft of this General Assembly resolution strongly demands that the Taliban refrain from providing safe haven to international terrorists, cease the recruitment of terrorists, close down terrorist training camps inside Afghanistan and take effective measures to ensure that the territory under its control is not used to sponsor international terrorist operations.

Sixthly, the humanitarian situation, aggravated by the worst draught in 30 years and by the destruction and criminalization of the economy, has deteriorated so dramatically that, as the Secretary-General has said, "most Afghans are reduced to eking out a 'bare bones' existence" (*A/55/633, para. 80*). We sincerely hope that this situation will not deteriorate any further in the future and we would like to send the message to the Afghan people that we continue to care about them, their human rights and their suffering after more than 20 years of war.

In concluding, I should like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General, to the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, and especially to the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Francesc Vendrell, for their tireless efforts to promote the peace process for Afghanistan. I should also like to take this opportunity to thank all United Nations staff members and other humanitarian relief workers who have been or still are working in Afghanistan for their excellent work in extreme and often discouraging conditions.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as Liechtenstein, as a European Free Trade Association country of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

For more than 20 years, the Afghan people have been the hostages of a war with alarming human consequences. Weary of a civil war of which it is the main victim, the civilian population is at last aspiring to the restoration of peace. In this context, a threefold challenge presents itself: an end to the fighting, defence of human rights and the quest for a political solution to the conflict.

The continuation of the armed conflict is the primary source of concern to the European Union. It must be stressed that this conflict is extremely destabilizing, not only within the territory of Afghanistan but for the whole region. The European Union is particularly concerned about the suffering the fighting has caused for the civilian population and condemns any armed action directed at civilians. With humanitarian conditions steadily deteriorating, the increase in the number of displaced persons and refugees is a major destabilizing factor. The European Union calls for an immediate end to enforced displacement, and appeals for people to be freely allowed to return home.

Furthermore, this conflict is fuelled by the proceeds of drug-trafficking, which the European Union vigorously condemns. While it notes that the Taliban issued a decree on 28 July 2000 completely prohibiting the cultivation of the opium poppy, it is watching very closely to see how this decree will be enforced. In this context, it urges the Taliban to implement that decree.

The European Union calls on the parties to the conflict to refrain from providing any assistance for the funding, training or protection of terrorist organizations. In this connection, it urges the Taliban to comply with Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) and to expel Usama bin Laden in accordance with the terms of that resolution.

The tragedy of the armed struggle is compounded by contempt for the most elementary rights. The European Union deplores the continued flouting of human rights and condemns the persistence of summary executions, in particular the massacre of prisoners at Samangan last May. It also condemns arbitrary detention and the very unsafe conditions in which detainees are held.

The European Union notes that the Afghan conflict gives free rein to large-scale religious and ethnic persecution. In this regard, the ethnic dimension of the conflict is especially worrying, as it appears to be one of the main reasons for the continued fighting. In addition to condemning such acts of violence, the European Union denounces the continuing discrimination against women and girls. It calls on the Afghan factions, particularly the Taliban, to recognize, protect and promote equal rights for men and women, notably as regards access to education, employment and health care. In this connection, it condemns the firman issued in July 2000 restricting the employment of Afghan women by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

The European Union has been the principal donor of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan for many years. It deplores the worrying deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the country. Furthermore, it appeals to the Taliban to honour their pledge to cooperate fully with the United Nations on humanitarian issues. As the conditions for providing humanitarian aid are particularly difficult, we call on the parties to the conflict to guarantee free and unimpeded access to the civilian population.

This conflict cannot be resolved by military means. The European Union therefore urges the parties to seek a political solution. In this context, it calls on the parties to observe a ceasefire. It supports the efforts of Mr. Vendrell, the Personal Representative of the

Secretary-General for Afghanistan, to move the peace process forward. It notes the exchange of separate letters of 30 October 2000 in which the Taliban and the United Front agreed to launch a process of dialogue through the good offices of the Secretary-General. It calls on the parties to commit themselves fully to this process of dialogue in order to restore peace and bring about reconciliation at an early date. Lastly, the European Union takes note of the conclusions reached at the meetings in Geneva and Montreux, and supports the prospects for the formation of a multi-ethnic, broadly representative Government that could be based in particular on the *loya jirgah* — the traditional Afghan mechanism of representation.

The European Union reaffirms its deep commitment to respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan. It deplores interference in that country's internal affairs by non-Afghans engaged in military activities, as referred to in paragraphs 23 and 81 of the Secretary-General's report. The European Union wishes to stress that it fully endorses the observations and recommendations in Mr. Kofi Annan's report.

Finally, it offers its firm support, as well as its sponsorship, to the draft resolution prepared by Germany, which Ambassador Dieter Kastrup introduced so eloquently. It is pleased that it will be possible for the Assembly to adopt the draft resolution by consensus. The draft resolution deals in detail with acts of violence on which we cannot compromise, and with the political solutions that the international community is ready to offer the parties. It attests, this year yet again, to the abiding attention that the members of this Assembly must devote to resolving a conflict that has gone on for far too long.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish to begin by expressing my thanks to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the various aspects of the situation in Afghanistan. This report reflects, inter alia, the sustained and dedicated efforts of the Secretary-General himself, as well as those of his Personal Representative, Mr. Vendrell, and his colleagues in the Department for Political Affairs and the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, to bring about a political settlement to the Afghan crisis. I commend the Secretary-General and Mr. Francesc Vendrell for their efforts, and reiterate the full readiness of my Government to extend all possible support and assistance to them in the difficult task ahead.

It is very unfortunate that during the year that followed the previous debate on Afghanistan in the General Assembly, the situation in that country showed no signs of improvement. The Taliban persisted in their futile search for military gain and rendered all efforts aimed at the restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan fruitless. As a result, the plight of the Afghan people continued unabated, stability in the region remained elusive, various threats against the security of the countries surrounding Afghanistan persisted and the whole world continued to feel threatened due to threats originating from Afghanistan.

During this period, we noticed no practical change in the fighting cycle in Afghanistan. The Taliban pursued their bellicose and intransigent policy on the ground. Based on this perennial policy and with total contempt for international demands, the Taliban leadership continued their military activities during this past summer and tried cynically to use the last moments before the cold season set in to launch their periodic offensives. As is underscored in paragraph 23 of the Secretary-General's report (A/55/633), in this year's season of fighting,

> "The Taliban ... took the initiative from the outset. The season's full-scale fighting started in the north of Kabul with two vigorous offensives by the Taliban forces on 1 and 9 July".

The defensive counterattacks by the forces of the Islamic State of Afghanistan that resulted in the recapturing of main territory lost to the Taliban reminded us once more of the futility of the military exercise.

We remain convinced that any military victory and conquest of territory in Afghanistan, which is a multi-ethnic society, are extremely short-lived and lead nowhere. The Taliban's militarist policy and illusion of the possibility of settling the complex crisis in Afghanistan through the barrel of a gun have only led to a worsening of the situation and impeded any progress in negotiations. In the final analysis, any eventual military dominance over ethnic groups in such a multi-ethnic society could not be but a recipe for further bloody conflicts.

Based on the historical facts, while ups and downs on the ground and on the military fronts are a

constant likelihood, no military development could drastically and definitively change the situation and act as a means to bring about peace, even an imposed one, in Afghanistan. The time when military conquest of territory could determine the outcome is far behind us, and the realities of Afghan society do not allow the domination of one ethnic group over the others.

It is a source of deep concern that the recent offensives by the Taliban, similar to those in the past, created enormous hardship for the civilians in the north-east of Afghanistan. According to the reports by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the heavy fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance in north-east Afghanistan has uprooted about 150,000 people. The latest report of the Secretary-General provides more information on the plight of the Afghan civilians who were forced to leave their homes due to the recent fighting in the central and northern regions.

What is much more alarming is the way the Taliban treat the innocent inhabitants of the conquered territories. The Secretary-General, in paragraph 78 of his annual report (A/55/633), reiterates that

> "There are numerous reports of Taliban troops deliberately destroying, burning and looting homes and assets essential for survival. The deliberate targeting and harming of civilians has a long history in the Afghan conflict and points to the urgent need to hold accountable those who are responsible for such heinous crimes."

The Secretary-General goes on to express great concern over reports about summary executions, arbitrary detention and forced labour in detention camps.

With the winter setting in, the situation of those persons driven from their homes by the Taliban and those already displaced is getting worse. In view of the inhumanely harsh and ethnically biased treatment of the local population by the Taliban, it is very difficult to envisage any return of the displaced persons to their homes as long as the area is under Taliban occupation.

Despite the fact that the principles of assistance programming have been regularly challenged by the Taliban authorities — as the Secretary-General stresses in his report — we believe that there is a pressing need for the international community to maintain its commitment to the Afghan people and spare no effort to provide them with humanitarian assistance.

My country's interests are best served through the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan. Trafficking in drugs, terrorism and extremism emanating from ongoing conflict in Afghanistan are creating instability in the region and constant threats against the national security and interests of countries surrounding Afghanistan, including my own country. Traffickers have turned the Iranian regions bordering Afghanistan and Pakistan into a landing place for illicit drugs smuggled from neighbouring eastern countries, with the intention of transiting the illicit cargo to consumer markets in Europe and the Persian Gulf States.

My country has been engaged for years in a costly war against heavily armed drug traffickers from certain eastern countries. This illicit and inhumane business is of a complex and transnational nature, and the wide range of organized crime that it creates is disrupting normal life in eastern Iran and adversely affecting the rest of the country. During the last year, 174 Iranian anti-drug personnel have lost their lives in confrontation with armed traffickers, and the estimated cost of this year's anti-drug campaign surpasses $1 billion.

In last week's armed conflicts with traffickers in Khorasan province, Iranian military and enforcement agencies released 87 hostages taken by drug traffickers.

The areas under Taliban control remain the world's largest supplier of opium, and they do not show any sign that they have decided to do away with the scourge of drugs. A slight decline of 10 per cent in opium poppy cultivation in the area does not live up to the Taliban decree of September 1999 to reduce opium poppy cultivation by one third. Moreover, if we take the severe drought and its impact on this year's planting into account, we may conclude that nothing serious has been done by the Taliban to curb the drug business. This means that the Taliban are intent on relying on income generated from illicit drugs for financing their war-making activities, and therefore the situation inside Afghanistan and in the neighbouring countries may continue to worsen.

In this respect, we should welcome the high-level meetings of the "six plus two" group, held at the United Nations Headquarters, and the active role played by this group, leading, among other things, to

the adoption of a regional action plan aimed at eliminating illicit drug production.

We believe that a political settlement of the Afghan conflict aimed at the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and representative Government is the only way to restore a lasting and comprehensive peace in Afghanistan. And peace, in turn, is the only remedy to the many ills that plague the Afghan people and their neighbours. Thus, we place great hope in efforts undertaken by the United Nations. The recent commitment expressed by the Afghan parties to enter into a process of dialogue represents a glimmer of hope for all and, above all, for the suffering Afghan people.

Meanwhile, we agree with the Secretary-General's statement, in paragraph 14 of document A/55/633, that

> "clearly the criterion for participation in the shaping of Afghanistan's future cannot be the holding of weapons, but that the non-fighting Afghans, both inside and outside the country, have much to contribute and need to be involved in deciding the ultimate destiny of their country."

As to the requirements for a final settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan, in our opinion it is first essential that the warring parties admit and recognize at the outset that in Afghanistan's multi-ethnic society there is a pressing and unavoidable need for a multi-ethnic, broad-based, representative and all-inclusive Government.

Secondly, good faith is a must in any negotiations. This, in turn, requires that the parties demonstrate political will. The evidence has thus far been indicative of a lack of such political will on the part of the Taliban. Over the past few years, the Taliban leadership has repeatedly resorted to a variety of tactics in an attempt to buy time and wait for the fighting season to set in. We hope that the Taliban are politically willing this time to abide by their commitment to negotiate in good faith.

Thirdly, we all need to understand and accept that the frenetic quest by the Taliban to resolve the problem by military means is absurd and can lead to no solution. With that in mind, it is regrettable that in the course of the recent offensives, the issue of the engagement of non-Afghan nationals on the side of Taliban forces became even more prominent. This is one of the issues of great concern, and we believe that this is an enduring and dangerous element that can lead to a spread of the conflict beyond Afghan borders.

Fourthly, given the record of the Taliban, the international community should remain alert at all times and oversee the process closely. It is essential that the international community avoid sending signals that could be wrongly interpreted by the warring parties. It is also essential that the world community, and the United Nations representing it, be prepared to act whenever it deems it necessary to deprive the belligerent and intransigent party from the means it needs to further its military and diplomatic objectives at the cost of continued suffering for the Afghan people and instability in the region.

Over the past few years, my country has tried to engage the Taliban in a positive way. To that end, the Iranian Government undertook to open two border crossing points into areas controlled by the Taliban; to deliver among other things, wheat and flour to Afghans when they needed it most; and to exchange numerous technical delegations between the two sides with a view to tackling various pressing issues. At the same time, we believe that while we try to engage the Taliban and further the peace process, the need to address certain pressing and urgent issues — such as terrorism, extremism, opium poppy cultivation and drug-trafficking in the areas controlled by the Taliban — cannot, and should not, be placed on hold. Those are issues of great concern to Afghanistan's neighbours and to the international community. If the Taliban are indeed sincere in their commitment to the peace process, they have to take immediate steps to address those concerns. The international community should hold the Taliban accountable for those issues and continue to address them in parallel with the political process.

In view of the most recent threats, we consider it to be quite cynical to turn the peace process and international humanitarian assistance into a shield for thwarting rightful actions contemplated by the international community aimed at putting an end to intransigence and belligerency. We believe that the Taliban should not be allowed to use the peace process and humanitarian assistance as a cover to escape accountability for illicit drugs and terrorism.

The issue of the tragic murders by Taliban forces of the staff of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the correspondent of the Islamic

Republic News Agency (IRNA) at Mazar-e-Sharif in August 1998 is still pending and remains unresolved. As the international community and the Security Council itself are fully aware, the Taliban stubbornly continue to disregard the rules of international law and have yet to implement Security Council resolution 1214 (1998), which condemned that crime and, in paragraph 5, called upon the Taliban

> "to cooperate with the United Nations in investigating these crimes with a view to prosecuting those responsible".

I would like to emphasize that the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined vigorously to pursue this matter to a conclusion in which justice is served. We remain hopeful that the United Nations will continue its valuable efforts in that regard.

We are pleased to sponsor draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1, which highlights the international community's commitment to addressing the Afghan conflict. We hope that the clear message contained in the draft resolution, which is sponsored by about 80 Member States, is heard by those who are blocking a peaceful settlement of this conflict. I would also like to place on record our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Germany and his colleagues for the excellent work they did in bringing about this draft resolution.

Mr. Smith (Australia): The Australian Government strongly supports international efforts to bring the long-running conflict in Afghanistan to an early and lasting resolution. We continue to urge all factions involved in the conflict to halt violence, conclude a durable ceasefire and form a viable Government that represents the interests of the Afghan people. We also call upon all parties in Afghanistan to adhere to universal human rights standards, particularly with respect to women and girls. We call upon the Taliban to comply fully with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1267 (1999).

Australia supports efforts by the United Nations, including through the "six plus two" group and the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, towards realizing a settlement that is representative of the interests of all Afghan communities. Australia encourages discussions among all neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, recognizing that a comprehensive solution requires their cooperation.

Australia's support for peace and reconciliation is given practical expression in the provision of Australian aid to Afghanistan, in which the protection and promotion of human rights are key issues. Afghan women have been a main focus of Australian aid, and all projects supported by Australia have been in accordance with the important United Nations principle that women and girls should participate in, and benefit from, aid projects.

In supporting and sponsoring draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1, Australia wishes to draw particular attention to the ongoing plight of the estimated 2.6 million Afghan refugees living in the countries neighbouring Afghanistan. We also want to draw attention to the urgent need to find durable solutions for them. Those 2.6 million refugees make up the largest single refugee group in the world.

Australia commends the efforts of the Governments of Iran and of Pakistan, which together have shouldered the major part of the significant task of providing asylum to Afghan refugees. Australia acknowledges that providing that assistance represents a significant diversion of resources from pressing national development needs in both Iran and Pakistan. In recognition of this, Australia is currently considering the provision of greater levels of assistance, focusing particularly on the problems of the movement of refugees other people throughout the region. We call upon other members of the international community to increase the level of support provided to refugee assistance undertaken in those countries.

Australia strongly supports enhanced and better coordinated efforts to address the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Such efforts are essential to minimizing the movement of people out of Afghanistan and creating conditions favourable to voluntary return. In response to this need, Australia recently earmarked 26.8 million Australian dollars for expenditure over four years on aid activities aimed at addressing the situation of Afghan and Iraqi refugees; 1.7 million dollars have already been provided for drought and food aid to Afghanistan through the World Food Programme, and a further 500,000 Australian dollars have been allocated to landmine awareness and demining projects. A central goal of that assistance is to help people remain in their homes rather than being forced to leave and join the already large population of displaced persons in the region.

The need for an increased commitment by the international community to support initiatives to find durable solutions for Afghan refugees is becoming critical. In the light of changing circumstances within Afghanistan and consequent changes in protection needs, greater efforts in the areas of registration and refugee status determination are necessary to determine the most appropriate durable solution for displaced Afghans.

The appropriate solution for the majority of Afghans currently displaced in the region is repatriation. The international community needs to support this by providing humanitarian and development assistance to ensure safe, dignified and sustainable return for those people that elect to return voluntarily and for those people determined not to require protection under international law. For a small minority, local integration or resettlement to a third country will be a more appropriate response to their particular protection needs. The international community should support those outcomes by providing assistance to countries of first asylum for local integration and by ensuring that adequate resettlement places are available. The provision of resettlement places in particular is essential if the international community wishes to continue to manage the movement of refugees throughout the world in an orderly manner and to dissuade people from using the services of people smugglers.

Australia strongly urges other nations to continue supporting the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, both in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries, and looks to mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Support Group to ensure that those efforts are coordinated. Failure to do this will result in further dislocation for these people and will encourage some to seek solutions through illegal immigration, with its associated dangers and costs.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is gravely concerned at the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, where periods of calm are followed by resumptions of increasingly fierce hostilities. The civil war that has been dragging on for many years has caused the people of Afghanistan untold suffering. It has caused an enormous number of deaths, the forced migration of millions of refugees and displaced persons and gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. As a result, the country has been divided into camps of warring factions; it has been set back decades and has been excluded from normal international discourse.

The General Assembly and the Security Council have repeatedly adopted decisions clearly stating the Taliban movement's responsibility for the continuing armed conflict in Afghanistan, for having torpedoed the Afghan peace process, for having grossly violated international humanitarian law and human rights and for illegally producing and trafficking in drugs. All of those destructive factors and the Taliban leadership's responsibility for them have once again been set out clearly in the report of the Secretary-General, entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" (A/55/633).

The international community's tireless efforts to involve the Taliban in the process of dialogue in order to create in Afghanistan a broadly representative government reflecting the interests of all Afghans have remained futile. There was one encouraging report: the agreement by the Taliban and the United Front on 2 November to enter into a process of dialogue without preconditions, under United Nations auspices, in order to bring to an end the Afghan conflict by political means. It seemed that, for the first time, the parties had undertaken in writing to seek a political settlement on the basis of an ongoing negotiating process.

But the Taliban have violated that pledge as well. They have not given up hope of resolving the conflict by force of arms and have thus far given no positive reaction to numerous appeals from the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, to agree to the proposed agenda for a political dialogue.

We are gravely concerned at the internationalization of the Afghan conflict and at the involvement of a large number of non-Afghans, particularly from the *madrassahs* in Pakistan. They are not only actively fighting on the side of the Taliban, but are involved in the planning and logistical support of their military operations.

There is no question but that Afghanistan has become a major drug-producing country. Seventy per cent of world drug production comes from Afghanistan. We welcome the international community's efforts to combat the Afghan drug threat. Here, we view as an important practical step the September adoption of a regional plan of action by the

"six plus two" group, with the active participation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

The threat of terrorism from Taliban-controlled territory is particularly dangerous. There, a major bridgehead for international terrorism and extremism has been erected. A great number of international mercenaries are located there; they not only participate actively in the fighting but are also making plans to destabilize the situation in other countries, including neighbouring countries.

The leaders of the Taliban movement openly give financial, military and other kinds of support to Chechen militants and to Uzbek, Tajik, Uigur and other extremists. Probably the most famous modern-day terrorist, Usama bin Laden, is a guest of the Taliban. Despite the many appeals from the international community to extradite this terrorist and put an end to support for, and to close down, the camps that train international terrorists on their territory, the Taliban are continuing their criminal policies.

In October 1999 the Security Council adopted resolution 1267 (1999) which imposed an international sanctions regime on the Taliban movement. Since that time they have been repeatedly warned of the possibility that additional sanctions would be imposed. Unfortunately, they continue to ignore all of the appeals of the international community.

The dangerous activities of the Taliban give every reason to tighten sanctions against their movement — targeted measures that could encourage the Taliban to renounce their support for international terrorism and to embark on a political dialogue both within Afghanistan itself and with their neighbours in the entire civilized world.

We think it is necessary to put a definite halt to the supply of weapons to the Taliban regime, to impose a military embargo on them and to restrict or fully close down the activities of their missions or offices abroad, as well as to freeze the financial assets of bin Laden and introduce an embargo on the supply of the chemical substances that are used to produce drugs.

Naturally, sanctions should not worsen the suffering of the ordinary citizens of Afghanistan. We hear that the sanctions against the Taliban apparently have negative humanitarian effects. It is quite clear that the reasons for the dire humanitarian situation, a situation now on the brink of disaster, lie altogether elsewhere. First and foremost is the continuing fighting, for which the Taliban is to blame. This, on top of the severest drought to hit the country in the last 30 years, is leading to the further destruction of an already war-sapped economic infrastructure.

In this situation, instead of focusing on helping the population of Afghanistan to survive in these difficult circumstances, the Taliban, through their actions, are making the situation even worse by fully shifting the burden for caring for the people of their country onto the shoulders of the international community.

We welcome the efforts of the international community to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to the needy people of Afghanistan. We note that this assistance should be distributed fairly, primarily to those who have suffered as a result of the fighting, as well as in areas that have been hardest hit by the drought.

Russia is concerned that the Taliban, instead of providing every assistance to the personnel of humanitarian organizations, instead of guaranteeing their safety, is hampering the work of those organizations. What is also dangerous is that they do not allow due assistance to be given to the rebel areas and thus use humanitarian assistance for their political objectives. We feel that we must definitely avoid any discrimination here and that we must ensure compliance with the principle of equal access to humanitarian assistance by all who need it.

We believe also that in these circumstances, international humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance to Afghanistan should enhance the efforts of the international community to achieve a speedy political settlement. Clearly, carrying out rehabilitation projects will become possible only when real progress is made in the peace settlement.

For its part, Russia intends to continue to give whatever humanitarian assistance it can to the Afghan people. From 1995 to 2000, Russia's Ministry for Emergency Situations provided humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people to the tune of about $2 million, the overall volume of which was about 200,000 tons. This included foodstuffs, clothing, tents, blankets, dishes and other essential goods.

At the beginning of this year, a special decision was taken to provide food for children, as well as medicines to the people of Afghanistan in the amount of more than $100,000. In November of this year, almost $400,000 was allocated to provide assistance to the people of the north-east region of Afghanistan, which bore the brunt of the fighting. The first consignment was 30 tons of medicines that has already been delivered.

We are also prepared to participate in a practical manner in the de-mining programmes in Afghanistan if appropriate safety is guaranteed and if the fighting stops.

We attach great importance to the adoption today of the draft resolution on Afghanistan, which Russia joined in sponsoring. We reaffirm our willingness to work together constructively with all interested parties in seeking to promote a peaceful political settlement of the conflict in that country on the basis of the decisions taken by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Mr. Pamir (Turkey): The political and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is one of the most preoccupying and pressing problems facing the international community, and the recent developments there are a source of serious concern.

Turkey has deep-rooted historical and cultural ties with the Afghan people. We attach the utmost importance to the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

We believe that there can be no military solution to the Afghan crisis, that the only viable way remains the establishment of a broad-based multi-ethnic Government embracing all parts of Afghan society, and that a lasting peace can be achieved in Afghanistan only after a durable ceasefire. This is a crucial requirement to start meaningful negotiations.

The ongoing conflict has been exacerbated by the attempts of one of the parties to gain control of the country through the use of force against legitimate authority. This not only contributes to the perpetuation of the precarious situation in the region, but also provides a fertile ground for threats such as terrorism, drug trafficking and religious extremism which make themselves felt far beyond Afghanistan's neighbourhood.

The overall outlook of the country is in stark contrast to the ideals and principles enshrined in the Charter. Hence, efforts to bring about a solution to the political and humanitarian aspects of the problem have yielded only minimum results. We believe that the international community should no longer remain indifferent to the aggression in Afghanistan and should stand firm against the violation by the Taliban of the ideals enunciated in the Charter. It is high time for the international community and the United Nations to take a more determined stand and effective steps to put an end to the suffering of the Afghan people and to threats that the present situation poses to international peace and security. The United Nations continues to have a central role to play in this respect and should redouble its efforts to secure a lasting ceasefire. Other initiatives aimed at bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan will prove successful if they are pursued in close coordination with the United Nations.

We are deeply concerned by the human rights violations and the discrimination against girls and women, as well as other acts of religious fundamentalism in areas under the Taliban's control. The resumption of fighting by the Taliban last July has added new problems to the already grave humanitarian and human rights situation on the ground and has led to further displacement of the civilian population. Afghanistan is in ruins today. Human and natural resources have been devastated, and basic rights and fundamental freedom of the majority of its people are under constant and flagrant violation. It is necessary to intensify assistance efforts of the relevant United Nations offices and agencies in Afghanistan to help alleviate the conditions of the Afghan people and to mobilize the international community to urgently extend their helping hand.

The prevailing conditions faced by the vast number of internally displaced persons are of alarming proportions, and these people are in urgent need of basic assistance such as food, shelter, heat and medicine. Humanitarian assistance to these internally displaced persons, who are concentrated in the areas administered by the legitimate Government of Afghanistan, must be increased. Furthermore, the funds allocated to the projects to improve the status of women in the Taliban region that for obvious reasons could not be used should be reallocated for women who are participating in social life in northern Afghanistan.

Turkey has provided shelter to displaced families in northern Afghanistan and is extending its humanitarian assistance, especially in the fields of health and education. Our food assistance to the worst-stricken people of Afghanistan is also substantial. We will continue to stand by the Afghan people in their hour of need.

The Afghan people certainly look forward to rebuilding their future in unity and harmony. The tormenting experience they have undergone only vindicates their aspiration to national reconciliation. We should all build on this sense of re-emergence. Turkey, as always, is ready to contribute to such an outcome. It was with this purpose in mind that it sponsored the draft resolution before the General Assembly.

Mr. Kobayashi (Japan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this subject, and the delegation of Germany for coordinating the important draft resolutions before us, which Japan is proud to sponsor.

Japan is gravely concerned at the continuing conflict and the worsening humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan are experiencing unspeakable hardships due to the combined effects of conflict and natural disasters. This situation is intolerable.

The Government of Japan pays its highest respect to the staff members of United Nations, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations who are working tirelessly to resolve the situation and to provide assistance to the people of Afghanistan. We request the Secretary-General and the Governments of the relevant Member States to take all possible measures to ensure the safety and security of these people as they courageously carry out their duties, often under extremely dangerous circumstances.

The warring parties must be made to understand that continued fighting will benefit no one and that they must take the course of action that will be best for the Afghan people and the future of the country. We call upon the parties concerned to put an end to the hostilities and to seek a peaceful settlement through negotiations. We must re-emphasize that the conflict in Afghanistan can be settled only through negotiations and with the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and representative Government. The countries concerned, and neighbouring countries in particular, should not interfere in the conflict, but rather should use their influence on the warring parties to bring the fighting to an end. It is especially important that all concerned stop extending military assistance or supplying arms to the warring parties and that they refrain from any other measures that could prolong the hostilities.

One very regrettable factor in the situation in Afghanistan is the barrier of mistrust that exists between the Taliban and the international community. Although the Taliban has shown some positive moves in response to the concern expressed by the international community — for example by announcing a ban on opium production and by allowing women some access to education — the barrier remains high. We call upon the Taliban to recognize the need to build a relationship with the international community that is based on genuine trust.

As stated in the Secretary-General's report, the Afghan programme cannot be reduced to a single issue. It is not only the conflict itself but also a multitude of related issues including drugs, terrorism, military support from foreign powers, human rights violations, humanitarian issues and sanctions. These issues cannot be resolved by tackling each issue in isolation. Therefore, we emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach by the international community to bring about a lasting solution to the Afghan conflict. From this point of view, Japan supports all efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace in Afghanistan, including the "six plus two" process, the Rome process and the initiative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. These processes must continue, while maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with the United Nations peace process.

We welcome in particular the agreement by the two warring parties to initiate a process of dialogue, which was confirmed in October in separate letters addressed to Mr. Vendrell, the Secretary General's Personal Representative and Head of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA). This is a first step towards peace, and we look forward to a positive outcome of the dialogue. Japan is prepared to host this dialogue in the future. UNSMA's role in ensuring continued dialogue between the Taliban and the United Front is more important than ever, and Japan remains ready to continue to contribute personnel to UNSMA.

With a view to supporting the United Nations peace process from an impartial position and to facilitating dialogue between the parties, Japan has seized various opportunities to invite representatives, at various levels, of the parties concerned to Japan to exchange views. We intend to continue these efforts in the future, in cooperation with the United Nations and the international community.

Japan attaches great importance to assistance to Afghanistan because of humanitarian reasons and because we believe that international assistance provides the parties with an incentive to reach a peaceful settlement. Our contributions have been extended chiefly through the framework of the Afghan Support Group. In particular, the Azra programme and the Greater Azra programme, which were implemented with the contributions of the Government of Japan, are regarded as realistic and situation-specific programmes for voluntary refugee repatriation and community development, and they have shown significant results.

We hope that the warring parties will engage in sincere efforts to achieve peace, realizing that the scope of international assistance will be limited as long as the conflict continues. Japan reaffirms its intention to provide further assistance for the development of Afghanistan once peace has been achieved and a broad-based, multi-ethnic and representative government has been established.

Sadly, as we stand here in the United Nations debating the situation in Afghanistan, the people of that country continue to endure tremendous hardships. For the sake of those people, Japan intends to cooperate to the fullest possible extent to achieve peace, stability and development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) (*spoke in French*): Since the General Assembly last considered the situation in Afghanistan on 17 December 1999 and adopted resolution 54/189, the direct involvement of Pakistani military personnel and non-Afghan combatants in the current conflict in Afghanistan has escalated considerably.

The international community is becoming increasingly aware of the direct involvement of Pakistani soldiers and officers in the continuing armed conflict in Afghanistan. The Secretary-General, in his latest report on Afghanistan of 20 November 2000 (A/55/633), pointed out, in paragraphs 23 and 81, that a considerable number of non-Afghan combatants, mainly from Pakistan, are fighting on the side of the Taliban. In that report, the Secretary-General states also that there is outside involvement in the planning and logistical support of the Taliban's military operations. That is the role played by the Pakistani armed forces.

These observations by the Secretary-General clearly indicate the presence of officers and other armed Pakistani elements who are actively involved in the fighting in Afghanistan, on the side of the Taliban. But the contents of the Secretary-General's latest report are nothing new. Indeed, in 1997 the Secretary-General, in his report dated 14 November 1997, stated in paragraph 18 that United Nations officials reported an unexpected encounter, near Kabul, with a foreign training unit of several hundred unidentified persons.

The presence of Pakistanis and of terrorist training centres in Afghanistan was recognized also by Mr. Paik, the former Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report dated 17 September 1997 (A/52/358) notes the presence of foreign fighters in Afghanistan and states that a number of prisoners taken by the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan admitted, under interrogation by the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA), that they came from various areas in Pakistan. The battle of Taloqan, which took place last summer and lasted 40 days, was waged not only by the Taliban but by armed Pakistanis, including elements from the regular Pakistani army, along with other foreigners from various countries. Pakistani advisers undoubtedly assured the Taliban that if it waged that battle, it would be able to take United Nations headquarters, and that, as a result, there would be no one left in the Assembly who could speak of its actions. The battle of Taloqan forced tens of thousands of men, women and children to leave their homes. Those refugees must now endure the hardships of winter in their camps.

General Musharraf, the author of last October's military coup, declared himself the Executive Chief of Pakistan. He stated — and here I refer to document A/54/945 of 21 July 2000 — that Pakistan's pro-Taliban policy was due to the fact that the Taliban belongs to the Pashtun ethnic group. He claimed that Pakistan's national security interests required this

support, for both demographic and geographical reasons.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan was surprised by such a declaration — a confession that is unprecedented in the history of Pakistan's foreign policy. Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic country situated at the heart of the Asian continent. Any foreign claim to, or support for, a given Afghan national group can only emanate from a very dangerous intent. All ethnic Afghan groups, including the Pashtun, are firmly united by both history and geography. That history has been marked by the unity of all Afghans against any foreign military invasion. Eminent Pashtuns in Afghanistan already have rejected General Musharraf's declaration.

No ethnic group has an absolute numerical majority within Afghanistan, a country where 34 different languages are spoken. None of Afghanistan's neighbours has the right to incite any ethnic group against another. That could only harm the nation's unity and territorial integrity, as well as regional stability, and any such action should be condemned by the General Assembly. This is true not only in cases where such support for a given ethnic group against another group has racial, linguistic or sectarian dimensions, but also in cases where such backing is used as a pretext for expansionist military intervention, in an attempt to breathe life into the Satanic notion of *Lebensraum*.

The direct and large-scale involvement of Pakistanis in the armed conflicts in Afghanistan is now well known throughout the world. I have given several pieces of evidence of this via the texts I cited previously in response to the propaganda campaign that the Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations conducted on 11 December 2000 via a letter that stated that the Secretary-General was wrong to say that a considerable number of Pakistani fighters were fighting alongside the Taliban and that he was wrong to say that the Pakistanis were not only taking an active part in the battles, but providing strategic and logistical assistance to the Taliban's military operations.

Once again, we ask the Security Council to send a commission of enquiry to Afghanistan and to visit the non-Afghan prisoners — the Pakistanis included — and verify that there is foreign intervention in Afghanistan. If Pakistan is sincere and innocent and renounces its direct participation in the Afghan conflict, it should join with us in pressing for such an enquiry.

The year that is coming to an end has shown the correctness of the opinions that we have stated so many times in the course of the past four years regarding the danger that Talibanism and Pakistan's expansionist military adventure pose to peace and stability in the region. The intensification of tension in Afghanistan is the direct result of the Pakistani intervention. Increasingly the effects of this intervention are being felt in South Asia and Central Asia. The countries of the region have expressed their uneasiness about this during bilateral and multilateral meetings.

We believe that, on the basis of what the Secretary-General has reported, we can state that there are very close ideological, organizational, political and military ties between the network of international terrorists and Pakistan's Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Pakistani military-intelligence service. The Pakistani religious schools, or madrassahs, are centres of indoctrination and regimentation used by the ISI to train fighters to carry out military activities. Thus in July 1999, after the retreat of soldiers and extremist fighters from the Kargil region of Kashmir, some of these fighters were transported in Pakistani military trucks north of Kabul in order to strengthen the Taliban armed forces. Pakistani prisoners held in Afghanistan have made unambiguous confessions about this.

The Pakistani aggression, as well as the terrorism and related activities, which is being carried out by a State and which is threatening the security of the region and hindering development and international cooperation, should be denounced, condemned and opposed by appropriate actions. The Pakistani military-intelligence service, the ISI, should be recognized as a criminal organization which is responsible for this war of aggression, for crimes against humanity and for war crimes.

We ask once again that the Security Council prepare a commission of enquiry to verify the aggression of Pakistan in Afghanistan and to present its findings to the Council. Taking into account the Pakistani aggression in Afghanistan, the Council might decide to grant Afghanistan reparations for the physical damage, the loss of human life and the pillaging of Afghani cultural property that have resulted from the war of aggression that Pakistan has carried out since

April 1992. We hope that Pakistan — the true source of the instability, with its centres for the indoctrination and regimentation of terrorists and its role as the source of the tensions in the region — will be the object of future sanctions of the Security Council.

The past year has once again been marked by systematic violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law by the Pakistan-Taliban-bin Laden axis in Afghanistan. The indiscriminate bombing, ethnic cleansing, the scorched-earth policy, discrimination against women and atrocities against civilians go on and on. We gave a detailed accounting of the Taliban atrocities against the Afghani people in our speeches to the Third Committee. The report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, Kamal Hussain, contained in document A/55/346 speaks eloquently on this point.

We greatly appreciate the role of the United Nations, as well as the tireless efforts of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, and the members of the "six plus two" group — apart from Pakistan, of course — who have been making sincere efforts to achieve lasting peace in Afghanistan. The Islamic State of Afghanistan, aware of the principle of the peaceful settlement of conflicts, sincerely wishes to see established in the country a Government that is fully representative, multi-ethnic and broad-based. Afghanistan also greatly wishes to have good relations with all the neighbouring countries, including Pakistan — that is, relations based on friendly cooperation and mutual respect.

In the draft resolution we read the term *loya jirgah*, which means "grand assembly". The Islamic State of Afghanistan supports this draft resolution. However, the Taliban have firmly expressed their opposition to it, because it runs counter to their ideology to take into consideration the views of the people of the country. The Taliban believe exclusively in military domination of the country — even if this domination is achieved via the intervention of a foreign army and by entering into an alliance with international terrorism.

The international media never stop repeating that three countries have recognized the Taliban. In reality, there is only Pakistan, which created the Taliban and which is thus the only country that recognizes them. The Government of the United Arab Emirates has steadily refused to establish an embassy in occupied Kabul. The staff of the Saudi Arabian embassy in Kabul has been withdrawn for many years, and Saudi Arabia has set significant limits on the activities of the so-called Taliban embassy in Riyadh.

The international media have never stopped repeating that 90 per cent of the territory is under the control of the Taliban. The truth is otherwise. In the occupied provinces, there is an armed resistance to the Taliban and their allies that stretches over at least 25 per cent of Afghan territory. In the rest of the country, the security is such as might be found in a prison, and the peace that of a cemetery. In spite of what was said by the representative who spoke before me, all the girls' schools are closed, and furthermore, even the technical institutes no longer exist. Material and spiritual obscurantism is the order of the day for the Taliban.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan has nothing but fraternal feelings for the people of Pakistan. It is the military junta and the notorious Inter-Services Intelligence — a State within a State — that dominate Pakistani diplomacy and jointly implement a policy of aggression against Afghanistan, which was a Member of the United Nations before Pakistan even existed.

The Pakistani authorities have often claimed, however, that they maintain contacts with our side. In fact, many months have gone by since the Pakistani Government deigned to restore such contact. Obviously, Pakistan, in its own self-interest, must abandon its policy of aggression against Afghanistan for such contact to prove effective in promoting peace and in the best interests of these two neighbouring countries.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, to convey our most sincere appreciation to the German mission for its tireless efforts in coordinating the elaboration of the draft resolution before us today. We also thank all the sponsors of the draft resolution, now numbering 83, and all those delegations that have supported it.

Mr. Bebars (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): A year ago, the Egyptian delegation delivered a statement on the agenda item which the General Assembly is considering again today. It is regrettable that an entire year has elapsed without any improvement in the humanitarian situation of the war-stricken Afghan people, which has suffered for over 20 years under the scourge of a brutal war that has turned its country into

a safe haven for terrorism and illicit trafficking in poisons and drugs.

The brutal perpetuation of the Afghan conflict, with its devastating humanitarian repercussions, is an expression of the failure of the international community to mobilize the political will necessary to bring the warring factions to the peace table and dialogue, while the impact of the Afghan conflict has overflowed Afghanistan's borders, threatening its neighbours.

Several factors have come together to perpetuate and exacerbate the suffering of the Afghan people. On the one hand, various factions are still fighting to seize and monopolize power; on the other, the country has been stricken by the most severe drought in 40 years. These factors have collectively aggravated the crisis of Afghan refugees, hundreds of thousands of whom have been stranded at the thresholds of other countries, seeking assistance and refuge from the cycle of violence in their own country, while United Nations assistance agencies continue to call for essential financial resources to provide urgently needed food supplies to these unarmed civilian refugees.

In expressing its utmost dismay at the severe humanitarian situation of the Afghan people, particularly the displaced among them, Egypt calls on the entire international community to find an urgent solution to the problem of Afghan refugees and to allow them to be repatriated voluntarily to their homes and exercise their right to live in stable and secure conditions.

I am compelled to refer to the practices undertaken in Afghanistan in the name of religion, particularly the persecution of women and the violations of their rights. I wish to emphasize from this rostrum that Islam is free from all such practices. It is a religion of tolerance, compassion and equality among all human beings, men and women alike. It is not a religion of discrimination and persecution.

In renewing its call on the international community to accord the necessary attention to the situation in Afghanistan, Egypt urges all the warring Afghan factions to heed the voice of reason and conscience and to put the welfare of their country before their own narrow and limited personal interests. We take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and to his Personal Representative to Afghanistan for their efforts to persuade all factions to engage in dialogue in an attempt to reach a peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): December this year marks the 21st anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union. That invasion triggered a tragic conflict, which has yet to come to an end.

So much has happened since that fateful December. The Berlin Wall has fallen, the Soviet Union has become history, the free world has expanded, the map of the world has changed, the dawn of the new millennium has arrived and old enemies have become partners. Yet, in Afghanistan, the victims remain the same. The anguish and pain of the people of Afghanistan remain undiminished, while their torment continues unabated.

As we analyse the present situation in Afghanistan, we cannot ignore the history immediately preceding it. The military campaign that was unleashed by the forces of the former Soviet Union in Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989 resulted in the deaths of over 1 million Afghans and forced 5 million more to flee and seek refuge in neighbouring countries. Towns and cities were reduced to rubble and the countryside was turned into a wasteland of minefields. The infrastructure of the country was devastated and, as a direct consequence of that invasion, instability continues to plague the region, while exacting a heavy price from the Afghan people.

Afghanistan was the last and decisive battle of the cold war. It served as a catalyst to release energies that eventually brought about an end to that era of confrontation. Today there are new dynamics which have altered the fundamentals of global relations. The world as we know it today might be different had it not been for the immense sacrifices that the valiant people of Afghanistan made for the cause of freedom and the free world.

With the end of Soviet occupation, the Afghan people rightly expected an environment of peace and reconstruction for their country, with external help and assistance. Unfortunately, the international community did not respond to the legitimate expectations of the Afghan people, who found themselves left by the wayside. After having used them to secure certain strategic objectives, the international community abandoned the Afghan people at a time when they most

needed external support and involvement in order to rebuild their shattered lives. Even today, the Afghan people remain largely ignored and are forced to cope with extreme circumstances in order to eke out an existence.

The origins of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan go back to the period of foreign occupation and the subsequent neglect by the international community. There was no Marshall Plan for the Afghan people. No concerted effort was made to create conditions conducive to peace and stability by giving the Afghan people an economic stake in their country. As a result, instability took root in Afghanistan, with traditional warlords of varying political and shifting allegiances seeking to assert control over parts of Afghanistan. To date, millions who fled the rigours of war continue to live as refugees in foreign lands. The country remains without any infrastructure, and its economy is in ruins.

International efforts since then to bring peace to Afghanistan have been too little, too late. International construction activities have been negligible at best. In the meantime, the Afghan people continue their slide into greater depths of poverty and deprivation in an environment of instability and insecurity.

Pakistan shouldered the main burden of the decade-long war against the foreign occupation of Afghanistan. We sheltered 4.5 million Afghan refugees during the Soviet occupation and still continue to bear the burden of the ongoing conflict, with the continued presence of over 2 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. That is the largest concentration of refugees anywhere in the world.

For the past two decades, Pakistan has suffered the most from the instability in Afghanistan. We are continuing to feel its impact. Pakistan, therefore, cannot be immune to developments in that country. We have no option but to deal in the best possible manner with the realities on the ground in Afghanistan, where the Taliban Government is in control of almost 95 per cent of the territory. Given our proximity to Afghanistan, our difficulties as a neighbouring country need to be viewed from that perspective. Pronouncements from afar may appear convenient, but they are flawed in their appreciation of the circumstances that are peculiar to Afghanistan.

Mr. Lelong (Haiti), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We have said before — and I say again — that no country in the world stands to gain more than Pakistan from the return of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Accordingly, we have followed a policy towards Afghanistan that seeks to support and supplement international efforts to promote a peaceful solution to the conflict.

We have extended our full cooperation to the efforts of the United Nations, as well as those of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, out of the conviction that there can be only a negotiated settlement of the Afghan conflict. We continue to believe that a solution must come from the Afghan people themselves. Governments imposed from outside have never been accepted by the Afghan people. No government can be parachuted in from outside in that country. External prescriptions are therefore bound to fail.

We remain convinced that durable peace in Afghanistan can be better achieved through a policy of engaging both Afghan parties and not by ostracizing one party or the other. It is imperative for the international community to maintain its neutrality between the parties and its objectivity in assessing the Afghan situation. To single out one party or another would not yield the desired results. In fact, it would contribute to prolonging the conflict.

While we strongly condemn all acts of terrorism in all their forms, scope and manifestations, whether committed by individuals, groups or States, we do not subscribe to the view that the imposition of sanctions will achieve the intended results. Sanctions are always unjust, unfair and counterproductive. Pakistan itself has been the target of externally sponsored acts of terrorism. We therefore fully share the international consensus on the need to combat this grave threat to our societies through close international cooperation and coordinated and focused measures that target the perpetrators of such crimes, as well as their collaborators.

We do not believe that sanctions are a useful policy tool that can be used, like a scalpel, with precision. Those who have borne, and will continue to bear, the main brunt of sanctions are the people of Afghanistan. It is they who have suffered, and will suffer, both the direct and indirect consequences of sanctions, whether already in existence or yet to be imposed. While such measures may or may not have

the desired impact on the rulers, they will certainly have an adverse impact on the humanitarian situation in that war-ravaged country. This is not just our assessment; it is also that of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and that of Human Rights Watch.

If I may quote from the OCHA report:

> "The high levels of vulnerability in Afghanistan exaggerate the impact of what would ... be fairly insignificant effects of the sanctions regime. The ability of ordinary Afghans to withstand any kind of deterioration in their situation after twenty years of war is extremely limited, and seemingly innocuous actions can have a serious impact on the lives of millions of people."

It is clear that the humanitarian tragedy in Afghanistan will deepen as a consequence of new sanctions that the Security Council is about to impose today. Millions of innocent Afghans who are already suffering from widespread famine conditions in their country due to prolonged drought — the worst in 30 years — will be further exposed to greater deprivation and hardship as United Nations aid agencies and non-governmental relief organizations withdraw from Afghanistan. Impartial aid agencies and relief organizations operating inside Afghanistan are unanimous in their view that the additional sanctions will only further aggravate the humanitarian crisis and tragedy.

The anticipated collapse of the international safety net is forcing further displacement and migration of the Afghan people. In the 23 days up to 14 December, 32,177 Afghan refugees entered Pakistan. Daily reports point to accelerating influx. There is an average of 35,000 Afghan refugees fleeing their homes and seeking refuge in Pakistan every month. Apart from derailing the United Nations-sponsored negotiations between the Afghan parties, which had raised hopes of peace, the additional sanctions that are going to be voted upon this afternoon and that are contained in the draft resolution only threaten to trigger a humanitarian disaster comparable to that which followed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

There is simply no such thing as smart sanctions. We therefore wonder whether it is prudent or even appropriate to seek to bring a few individuals to justice by subjecting a whole nation to international, political and economic isolation and misery. The 26 million people of Afghanistan have already suffered the rigours of two decades of conflict and have made unparalleled sacrifices for the cause of freedom. They do not need any further suffering. They are now being asked to accept further burdens that are bound to exacerbate the already acute humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

We are also concerned that the sanctions approach is likely to have a negative impact on the still-nascent peace initiative of Secretary-General's Personal Representative, Mr. Francesc Vendrell. We were looking forward to his return to New York in the first week of February, as mandated by the "six plus two" group and the Security Council, to present his assessment of his ongoing efforts to promote a peaceful solution to the Afghan conflict. The recent agreement that he secured from the two main parties to commence negotiations may very well be the first victim of the new sanctions regime. This written undertaking that Mr. Vendrell obtained from both warring sides is contained in the letter of the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly (*A/55/548*), which contains the text as agreed by both sides.

In other words, this precipitous move today will only scuttle the peace process, which the Secretary-General initiated through his Personal Representative in good faith and in all sincerity. In these circumstances, the hope that Mr. Vendrell's peace mission would lead to some results may very well prove to be misplaced. It had been our expectation that the international community would extend support to this peace process and scrupulously avoid steps or measures that could undermine it. The measures that are being enacted today by the Security Council are essentially the result of political expediency and are not based on considerations of peace and stability in the region or the humanitarian situation in Pakistan. They will serve only the narrow and self-serving objectives of a few vested interests.

There is at least one development that we can view with some degree of satisfaction. The "six plus two" group on Afghanistan has initiated a regional action plan to counter illicit drug production and drug trafficking from Afghanistan. We are hopeful that the international community will extend all possible support to this important initiative. In this regard, we are also pleased to note that the Taliban leadership has issued an order banning poppy cultivation throughout the areas under their control. It is now up to the

international community to help the Afghan people through effective and comprehensive alternative development programmes by providing them with alternative means of income and crop substitution assistance to end their economic dependency on poppy cultivation. Without this assistance to the Afghan people, reliance on interdiction of narcotics alone will not suffice to prevent drug trafficking.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record our deep appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his untiring efforts to promote durable peace in Afghanistan. The Secretary-General and his Personal Representative have worked assiduously to bring about an early end to the two-decade-old conflict in that war-ravaged country. While the Secretary-General continues to provide leadership to efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Afghan conflict, these are regrettably being hampered by Secretariat officials who lack the capacity to undertake an accurate analysis and objective assessment of the situation in that country, causing avoidable embarrassment to the Secretary-General himself. I think that Mr. Brahimi, in his famous report, has rightly underscored the deficiencies of information analysis and assessment in the Secretariat.

This is not something new or surprising. We have often been provided with reports and documents by the Secretariat that are either incomplete or biased and have never been accorded blanket endorsement by the Member Governments without proper scrutiny and debate. Therefore, there was absolutely no question of giving a blanket endorsement to the report of the Secretary-General on the question that we have in front of us today.

We are disappointed that the Secretary-General's report on Afghanistan, instead of being objective and comprehensive, is partial in both content and intent.

It reflects the opinions of those who insist on looking at the situation in Afghanistan from an skewed angle. The report does not present the whole picture. We have to look at the situation in both a holistic and impartial manner. The United Nations cannot, and must not, unduly take sides in a conflict, especially when it is clear that one side is not completely responsible for the conditions that exist in that country. We hope that the Secretariat will in the future meet the essential requirements of objectivity and impartiality.

I would now like to comment briefly on the draft resolution before the General Assembly in document A/55/L.62/Rev.1. My delegation put forward a number of constructive proposals to help bring about a semblance of balance in the text. Some of them were accepted, while a number of others were not. We fully share the concern with regard to the excesses committed by one party or the other to the conflict in Afghanistan. We do not condone them. However, we are constrained to note that the draft resolution places the primary responsibility for the cumulative ills related to the Afghan situation of the last 21 years on the doorstep of only one party.

That inherent vice of the draft resolution will only strengthen the perception that one party is the victim of unfair discrimination, while emboldening the other side to perpetuate the conflict in the belief that, with outside support, it will eventually emerge as the victor. So what happens? The conflict will be perpetuated. Needless to say, that message from the General Assembly can only further complicate the prospects for durable peace in Afghanistan. That certainly is not the intention of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the United Nations.

Due to those reasons, Pakistan has decided to disassociate itself from draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1. We are not calling for a vote, in order to enable its adoption by the Assembly by consensus. However, to conclude, I do want to take this opportunity to express on behalf of my Government our deep appreciation and gratitude to all the delegations that extended their support and understanding for our position during the discussions on this draft resolution — and there was an overwhelming number of them. We are indeed most grateful for their contribution and cooperation.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1, which has two parts. Part A is entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security". Part B is entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan".

I should like to announce that since its publication, the following countries have become

sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Costa Rica, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.62/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/174).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 20?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 46.

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Draft resolution (A/55/L.64)

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Draft resolution (A/55/L.66)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions before it under agenda item 20 and its sub-item (b).

The Assembly will first turn to draft resolution A/55/L.64, entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs Division, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): Before action is taken on draft resolution A/55/L.64, I should like to inform members that under the terms of operative paragraphs 15, 17 and 18 the General Assembly calls for putting in place measures for an effective and comprehensive security management system for the personnel of the United Nations system, both at Headquarters and at the field level, including the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 54/192 of 17 December 1999 and 54/249 of 23 December 1999, in which the Assembly recognized the need to review the existing safety and security arrangements for United Nations personnel, the Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly (A/55/494), has proposed a number of measures for the improvement of the safety and security of United Nations personnel. Those measures respond adequately to draft resolution A/55/L.64. The report of the Secretary-General, along with the proposals for additional resources, is currently under consideration by the Fifth Committee in the context of agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", and agenda item 123, entitled "Human resources management".

Therefore, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/55/L.64, it would not give rise to any additional requirements for the biennium 2000-2001 over and above those already reported to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in his report contained in document A/55/494, which, as I indicated a moment ago, is currently being considered by the Fifth Committee.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.64. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.64: Belarus, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Gabon, Georgia, Guinea, Guyana, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Togo.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.64?

Draft resolution A/55/L.64 was adopted (resolution 55/175).

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.66, entitled "Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Burkina Faso has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/55/L.66.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.66?

Draft resolution A/55/L.66 was adopted (resolution 55/176).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 20 and its sub-item (b).

Agenda item 43 (*continued*)

The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Draft resolutions (A/55/L.33/Rev.1, A/55/L.42/Rev.1)

Reports of the Fifth Committee (A/55/694, A/55/695)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on this item at its 80th plenary meeting, held on 4 December 2000.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.33/Rev.1, entitled "United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.33/Rev.1: Austria, Belize, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Peru, the Russian Federation and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.33/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.33/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/177).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Indonesia has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/55/L.42/Rev.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.42/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/55/L.42/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/178).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 43.

Agenda item 29 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Draft resolution (A/55/L.69)

Amendment (A/55/L.70)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on this item at its 39th plenary meeting, held on 25 October 2000.

I should like to inform members of a correction to the English version of draft resolution A/55/L.69. In paragraph 15, fourth line from the bottom, the word "President" should read "Presidents".

I call on the representative of Austria to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.69.

Mr. Marschik (Austria): I have the honour today to take the floor in my capacity as representative of the Chair-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.69, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe", on behalf of the 37 sponsors listed in the document. In addition, the following States have joined in sponsoring the draft resolution: Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Monaco, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Yugoslavia.

As we approach the end of the Austrian chairmanship of the OSCE, permit me to emphasize that Austria is proud to have had the opportunity to serve in this function in the year in which we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. Based on a broad concept of security and stability which always stressed the role of the individual and the importance of respect for human rights, the ensuing Helsinki process has relied heavily,

and with substantial success, on the cooperation of the States involved.

Today, 25 years later, cooperation between States, but also between international organizations, remains crucial in the attempts to solve the remaining security and stability problems in the OSCE region. As the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, the Austrian Foreign Minister, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, recalled in her statement during the debate on this item on 25 October, that the need to ensure proper coordination, efficient use of resources and pragmatic division of labour between the institutions of multilateral diplomacy is the particular responsibility of the member States.

Improving and strengthening cooperation with the partner organizations, in particular the United Nations, was therefore one of the main objectives of the Austrian chairmanship of the OSCE. The meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council held in Vienna on 27 and 28 November had as its central theme cooperation between the United Nations, the European Union and the OSCE with regard to the interaction and complementarity of mechanisms for rapid response to international conflicts.

In this respect, Austria would once again like to express its appreciation for the participation of Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette at that meeting. Indeed, the keynote speech of the Deputy Secretary-General at the Vienna ministerial meeting was the high point of a year of very satisfactory cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE.

In the Security Council, Austria, in its capacity as Chair-in-Office of the OSCE, has repeatedly expressed the gratitude of the OSCE for the good cooperation with the United Nations in the various field missions in the OSCE region. In this context, I would also like to pay tribute to the many individuals working for both organizations in the field whose daily close cooperation has proved to be so valuable.

Let me now turn to the draft resolution before us. Clearly, the text has the same structure and methodology as in the years before, and I will therefore make only some very brief remarks.

The draft resolution welcomes in several provisions the excellent cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE, as I have just outlined, and expresses its hope that this process will continue in the future.

Two new provisions, in paragraphs 5 and 6, express support for the recent initiatives of the OSCE in regard to strengthening the role and the protection of the individual, inter alia, by combating various serious transnational security threats that exist in the OSCE region today.

In view of the positive developments in South-Eastern Europe, paragraph 8 welcomes the admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the OSCE on 10 November 2000 and commends the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for its commitment to the principles and standards of the OSCE, as well as for its readiness to cooperate with European institutions and with its neighbours.

As in previous years, the main part of the draft resolution then provides information on developments in the OSCE region in the last year, especially in regard to regional conflicts where the United Nations is also actively involved. There is no need for me to go into detail, but I would just like to point out that, naturally, the listing of developments is not exhaustive.

Finally, as regards the procedure, I would like to stress that Austria followed the example of the previous OSCE chairs, which relied on language used in the OSCE and accepted by the OSCE member States. In the General Assembly this language is regularly amended, and the corresponding amendment will subsequently be introduced.

In closing, let me briefly express my personal gratitude for the assistance I received from the United Nations Secretariat as well as the other members of the OSCE troika, Norway and Romania, during the whole year.

As regards the coordination of the draft resolution, I would like to express my thanks to all those delegations that participated in the consultations both in Vienna and here in New York, for their proposals, their flexibility and their patience, which were all necessary to put this text together.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Azerbaijan to introduce the amendment to draft resolution A/55/L.69, contained in document A/55/L.70.

Mr. Kouliev (Azerbaijan) (*spoke in Russian*): Before I introduce the amendment of the delegation of Azerbaijan, allow me to touch on an important matter that has a direct bearing on the item before us.

The delegation of Azerbaijan profoundly regrets that, as occurred last year, the statement made in plenary meeting on 25 October this year by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), covered an entire range of questions facing the OSCE but did not mention a serious problem that is being dealt with directly by the OSCE, namely, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in and around the Nagorny-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

As a result of this conflict, 20 per cent of the territory of my country — not of Armenia — is still under occupation. Azerbaijan is the only State — I emphasize — the only State in the OSCE area whose territory is occupied by a foreign State. My country, not Armenia, has been compelled to cope with a humanitarian emergency that has caused the exodus of 1 million refugees and displaced persons.

In the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons, it is noted that the number of displaced persons in Azerbaijan is one of the highest in the world. Approximately one out of every seven people is an internally displaced person or a refugee. This information is contained in document E/CN.4/1999/79/Add.1.

Moreover, in gross violation of the relevant provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Armenia has started to populate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in order to change to its advantage the demographic situation in the conflict area. Therefore, I would like to know, if the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE has not touched on this acute problem and acts as if it does not exist at all, how one can explain the appearance of operative paragraphs 15 and 16 in the draft resolution?

Allow me now to introduce the amendment of the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan to draft resolution A/55/L.69, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe", contained in document A/55/L.70. Unfortunately, it has become a tradition that the delegation of Azerbaijan, year after year, has to submit an amendment to the draft resolution on this item. The amendment we propose largely reproduces the language of resolution 49/13 adopted by the General Assembly without a vote on 15 November 1994. Operative paragraph 8 of that resolution states that the General Assembly

> "*Fully supports* the activities of the Conference aimed at achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic and to alleviate the tension between the Republic of Armenia and the Azerbaijani Republic, and welcomes cooperation between the United Nations and the Conference in this regard".

I need to make two comments on this, the first of which is technical. In 1994, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was called the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. My second comment is substantive. As members can see when they compare the amendment with operative paragraph 8 of resolution 49/13, the language of the proposed formulation is softer and does not mention the opposing party to the conflict, the Republic of Armenia.

The reasons for putting forward this amendment are still valid and important. It is a matter of principle. The interests sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country are directly affected. Operative paragraphs 15 and 16 of draft resolution A/55/L.69, which relate to this problem, are again different in substance from the language adopted by the General Assembly at the five previous sessions. Nevertheless, acting in a spirit of compromise, the delegation of Azerbaijan has proposed its amendment not to replace operative paragraphs 15 and 16, but as a new operative paragraph. I wish to express our gratitude to the Permanent Mission of Austria for its efforts to accommodate our concern.

Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity have been repeatedly reaffirmed by the international community, and primarily by the Security Council in resolutions on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan: resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993). The previous reports and current report of the Secretary-General on this agenda item, in documents A/50/564, A/52/450, A/53/672, A/54/537 and A/55/98, also clearly state that Nagorny Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan. I wish to draw members' attention to the fact that, as is clear from the points I have made, three main components of

the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General — have reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country.

Members have before them a small amendment that is vitally important to our country and its future. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I appeal to Member States to adopt a position of principle and to vote in favour of the amendment contained in document A/55/L.70.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.69 and on the amendment thereto contained in document A/55/L.70.

In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the amendment is voted on first. The Assembly shall therefore take a decision first on the amendment circulated in document A/55/L.70.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Djibouti, Ecuador, France, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen.

Against:

Armenia.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Congo, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

The amendment was adopted by 62 votes to 1, with 65 abstentions.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.69, as amended.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri

Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against:

Armenia.

Draft resolution A/55/L.69, as amended, was adopted by 147 votes to 1 (resolution 55/179).

The Acting President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Smith (United States of America): First, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the delegation of Austria for its work in preparing the resolution on which we have just voted. Secondly, with regard to the amendment proposed by Azerbaijan, I would like to state that my delegation's vote in favour of the amendment is without prejudice to the outcome of negotiations on a settlement of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to explain briefly Egypt's vote on the amendment to draft resolution A/55/L.69.

After carefully considering the draft resolution before us today, the delegation of Egypt decided to abide by the recommendations of the coordinator of the item, especially since these recommendations coincide with the 1999 Istanbul Declaration, in whose elaboration the two parties to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict participated. The text also coincides with the language used by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in its statement of 28 November 2000.

Secondly, the draft resolution relates to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, not to any regional strife or conflicts.

Thirdly, the text does not align itself with any party to the conflict and only welcomes the efforts of the Organization to build confidence between the two parties.

In conclusion, I should like to state that Egypt's vote today has nothing to do with our position on the conflict in Nagorny Karabakh.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 29?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The Acting President: The Assembly will now consider reports of the Fifth Committee under agenda items 138 (b) and 12. If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that

we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise. This means that, where recorded votes and separate votes were taken, we shall do the same. I also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 138

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/681)

The Acting President: The Assembly will consider the report of the Fifth Committee on sub-item (b) of agenda item 138, entitled "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon".

I now call on the representative of Israel, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): I should like to note that in principle, Israel supports the continued funding and strengthening of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is only because of the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 14 that Israel is opposed to the draft resolution contained in document A/55/681.

At this time I would like to briefly clarify a few facts relating to the Qana incident. What occurred at Qana in April 1996 was deeply tragic, incurring the loss of life and significant damage to property. The cause of this incident, however, was tragic as well. The cause was the cynical tactics of the terrorist organization, Hezbollah, which used civilians as human shields for its attacks. While Israel had no way of knowing that there were civilians taking refuge in the area, Hezbollah was well aware that its activities would jeopardize the lives of innocent civilians nearby.

As we have previously pointed out, this heinous guerrilla tactic remains in use today throughout the world. Unfortunately, it has also been a tactic that the Hezbollah has used in concert with their other terrorist operations, including the taking of hostages, violent assaults on the diplomatic missions of States and the deliberate targeting of civilian in rocket attacks.

In this case, the rocket attacks were launched from a site less than 300 metres from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) compound in Qana, in the hope that Israel's exercise of its right of self-defence would draw return fire towards Qana and imperil the safety of the United Nations personnel and the civilians in the area. The decision to place on Israel alone the burden of the cost of the damage resulting from the Qana incident is an unprecedented and one-sided initiative. This sort of initiative has never been directed against any other Member State involved in a conflict in which United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed.

In this regard, I would like to recall the established practice that resolutions relating to budgetary questions are to be adopted by consensus. Due to the introduction of political elements in the resolution, this established practice has been broken. The responsibility for the failure to achieve a consensus on this issue lies squarely with those who seek to exploit every item on the agenda to advance political objectives.

For these reasons, Israel will vote against the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 14, and should these paragraphs be retained, Israel will vote against the draft resolution as a whole.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report. The draft resolution is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon".

A single separate vote has been requested on the fourth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 14 of the draft resolution. Is there any objection to that request? There is none.

I will now put to the vote the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 14, on which a single separate vote has been requested. A recorded vote has been requested.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia,

Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 14 were retained by 85 votes to 3, with 47 abstentions.

The Acting President: I now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America.

The draft resolution was adopted by 140 votes to 3 (resolution 55/180).

The Acting President: I give the floor to those delegations who wish to speak in explanation of the vote after the vote.

Mr. Smith (United States): The United States strongly supports the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as it continues its efforts to implement a difficult and important mandate. However, the use of General Assembly funding resolutions to pursue claims against a Member State is not procedurally correct. We opposed resolutions 53/227, 52/237 and 51/333 in previous years, and resolution 54/267 earlier this year, because they contained sections that require a Member State to pay for costs stemming from the Qana incident several years ago. These resolutions were not consensus resolutions.

Since shortly after the United Nations inception the procedure that has been followed is that the Secretary-General presents and pursues the settlement of claims against a State or States. This procedure has been applied before in the Middle East and continues for peacekeeping-related damage claims in the Balkans. Using a funding resolution to legislate a settlement is inappropriate. It also politicizes the work of the General Assembly's Fifth Committee and should be avoided, both now and in the future.

Mr. Bebars (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Arab Group, my delegation, as Chairman of the Group for December, wishes to explain its vote.

With the adoption of resolution 55/180 today, this is the fifth year in which the General Assembly has called on Israel to bear its responsibility by paying the costs incurred as a result of its aggression on the United Nations headquarters in the Lebanese town of Qana.

The position of the Arab Group is based on two central principles. First, we must not allow a deliberate attack on a United Nations peacekeeping compound to set a precedent in the history of the Organization, whereby an occupying Power deliberately targets a United Nations compound. Member States are called on to bear the burden of the impact of this aggression. That would imply additional and unjustified financial burdens for the Member States and threaten the financial situation of these forces.

Secondly, the sanctity of the principle of maintaining the security and safety of peacekeeping personnel is the cornerstone of the funding of peacekeeping operations. Any hesitation in the implementation of that principle would send the wrong message to those States that violate Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and would allow them to circumvent their responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel. It would also allow them to justify their aggression against the headquarters of peacekeeping forces, which would in turn jeopardize the mission of these forces and prevent them from fulfilling their mandate in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

The Arab Group can only, in a responsible way, express its concern vis-à-vis Israel's disregard of the Secretary-General's letters, in which he seeks reimbursement of the costs incurred as a result of Israel's aggression on the United Nations peacekeeping compound in Qana, amounting to $1,284,336. This sum has been recorded as a debit in the Special Account of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The resolution calls on the Secretary-General to take strict necessary measures to compel Israel to assume its responsibility for reimbursing this sum.

On this occasion, the Arab Group wishes to extend its thanks and appreciation to UNIFIL for the positive role it has played. We also express our gratitude for the many sacrifices its personnel have made in fulfilling their tasks.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to thank the representative of Egypt for the statement he has just made on behalf of the Arab Group.

I have asked to speak in reply to the statement made by the representative of Israel and to remind everyone why the General Assembly has adopted the resolution on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

This resolution did not come out of nowhere and was not based on invalid premises, as the representative of Israel tried to depict. It arose from a responsibility and obligation forced upon us by the rules and regulations that we follow in the Fifth Committee concerning the financing of United Nations peacekeeping forces throughout the world. The two basic principles followed here are, first, the sanctity of maintaining the security and safety of United Nations peacekeeping personnel, which is the cornerstone in the financing of peacekeeping operations; and secondly, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, as affirmed in the reports of the Secretary-General and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The resolution adopted today is not, as described by the representative of Israel, an attack by Lebanon on

Israel. Indeed, it is the opposite. The General Assembly has adopted the resolution on the basis of a letter dated 7 May 1996 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, as contained in document S/1996/337. This letter dictated the specific characteristics of the resolution, as reflected in the following statement of the Secretary-General in it:

> "I view with utmost gravity the shelling of the Fijian position, as I would hostilities directed against any United Nations peace-keeping position. But this incident is all the more serious because civilians, including women and children, had sought refuge in the United Nations compound at Qana." (*S/1996/337, p.1*)

The Secretary-General was very resolute concerning the grave aspects of that incident, which led Lebanon and the Group of 77 to submit the resolution which the General Assembly subsequently adopted. This affirms, first, the deliberate nature of the attack. The report of Major General Franklin van Kappen, assigned by the Secretary-General to investigate this aggression, clearly refers to the deliberate nature of Israel's shelling of the United Nations position.

Secondly, I would refer to the large number of casualties and the sanctity of the place attacked. The deliberate Israeli attack on the United Nations compound in Qana was a massacre in which 102 Lebanese civilians — most of them women, children and the elderly — were killed.

Thirdly, disregarding the sanctity of the principle of the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping forces will send the wrong message to the occupying Power and encourage it to continue neglecting the security of United Nations peacekeeping forces. This in turn will unjustifiably threaten the future of United Nations peacekeeping forces and endanger the lives of the personnel and of the civilians whom they protect.

Fourthly, this draft resolution must be implemented if we are to maintain the credibility of General Assembly resolutions, since, for the fifth year in succession, Israel has failed to pay the costs of its aggression and has not responded to letters from the Secretary-General in this respect.

Fifthly, we must ensure that the peacekeeping forces are properly funded so that they can carry out their mandate in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): I believe that in my previous statement I fully clarified the position of my Government with regard to the incident that took place at Qana in 1996, and I am not going to repeat my previous statement. However, the representative of Lebanon also spoke about the need for countries to live up to their obligations and about reports issued by the Secretariat and the Secretary-General, and I would like to make a statement in this regard.

I should like to recall that in May of this year Israel completed its withdrawal from Lebanon, in full compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). This withdrawal was subsequently confirmed by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Security Council, which referred to it in Security Council resolution 1310 (2000). It must be recalled that Security Council resolution 425 (1978) calls not only for the withdrawal of Israeli forces but also for the restoration of international peace and security and the return of the effective authority of the Government of Lebanon in the area. Furthermore, I would like to recall that, in paragraphs 6 and 7, resolution 1310 (2000) calls upon the Government of Lebanon

> "to ensure the return of its effective authority and presence in the south, and in particular to proceed with a significant deployment of the Lebanese armed forces as soon as possible ... and ... to ensure a calm environment throughout the south".

Now that Israel has fully fulfilled its obligations in accordance with Security Council resolutions, the responsibility for ensuring peace and security in the area lies primarily with the Government of Lebanon. Clearly, this must include preventing acts of violence and aggression directed against Israel. The Government of Lebanon has failed to fulfil this obligation, which has resulted in numerous violations of the blue line. The most serious of these violations include the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers on 7 October; an attempt at infiltration by heavily armed terrorist cells on 20 October; and the killing of an Israeli soldier by a roadside charge on 16 November. We call once again upon the Government of Lebanon to fulfil its obligations and to prevent all terrorist activities emanating from its territory aimed at the State of Israel.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Lebanon, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind delegations that statements are limited to five minutes for the second intervention.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I apologize for having to speak for the second time in exercise of the right of reply. However, as usual, the representative of Israel has failed to address the main issue under consideration, and instead moved to another issue that has no relevance to the work of the General Assembly today. The Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon has no bearing on Israel's responsibility for the massacre at Qana. Once again, we would like to reaffirm that it is imperative for Israel to fulfil its obligation, as set out in General Assembly resolutions, to abide by the principle of the protection of civilians and to ensure the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping forces and their personnel. When Israel has done all that it will have implemented its obligations in accordance with this resolution.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Israel, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): I am fully aware of the lateness of the hour, and I do not intend to take too much of the time of the General Assembly. However, the representative of Lebanon spoke about the acts of aggression committed by Israel in 1996. I think his baseless allegations should be set against the recent record of the Government of Lebanon with regard to encouraging terrorist activities from Lebanon against Israel. This, I think, says more than anything else about the credibility of his allegations.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 138.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/662)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 12, dealing with those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were allocated to the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of its report.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were allocated to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President in the Chair.

The President: I should like to inform members that on Thursday, 21 December 2000, in the morning, the General Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 27, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity", agenda item 30, entitled "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review", and agenda item 50, entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", for the purpose of taking action on the draft resolutions before the Assembly under those agenda items.

I should like to reiterate my intention that on Thursday morning all outstanding matters concerning plenary agenda items for this part of the session will be dealt with by the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.87

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

87th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 20 December 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Reports of the Second Committee

The President: The General Assembly will consider the reports of the Second Committee on agenda items 92 to 102 and 12. I request the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, Mr. Ahmed Amaziane of Morocco, to introduce the reports of the Second Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Amaziane (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to present for consideration the following reports of the Second Committee on the agenda items allocated to it by the Assembly at its current session.

Under item 12 of the agenda, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of the three draft decisions in paragraph 9 of document A/55/590.

Item 92 is entitled "Macroeconomic policy questions". Under sub-item (a), entitled "Trade and development", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions, in paragraph 11 of document A/55/579/Add.1, and of one draft decision, in paragraph 12.

Under sub-item (b), entitled "Commodities", the Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution, in paragraph 6 of document A/55/579/Add.2.

Under sub-item (c), entitled "External debt crisis and development", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 7 of document A/55/579/Add.3, with the following amendments in the English text. In operative paragraph 3, on the fourth line, insert the word "hence" after the word "initiative,". On the fifth line, replace the word "and" by a comma. On the seventh line, replace the word "consecutively" by the words "back to back". In operative paragraph 13, on the fourth line, delete the comma after "Trust Fund".

Under sub-item (d), entitled "Science and technology for development", the Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution, in paragraph 8 of document A/55/579/Add.4, and of one draft decision in paragraph 9.

Under sub-item (e), entitled "Financing of development, including net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 8 of document A/55/579/Add.5.

Under item 93 of the agenda, entitled "Sectoral policy questions", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of the two draft resolutions in paragraph 15 of document A/55/580.

Under item 94 of the agenda, entitled "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 5 of document A/55/581/Add.6.

Under sub-item (a), entitled "Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 5 of document A/55/581/Add.1.

Under sub-item (b), entitled "Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 6 of document A/55/581/Add.2.

Under sub-item (c), entitled "Cultural development", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 7 of document A/55/581/Add.3.

Under sub-item (d), entitled "High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 6 of document A/55/581/Add.4.

Under sub-item (e), entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", the Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions, in paragraph 13 of document A/55/581/Add.5.

Under item 95 of the agenda, entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of three draft resolutions, in paragraph 16 of document A/55/582/Add.8.

Under sub-item (a), entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21", the Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions, in paragraph 15 of document A/55/582/Add.1.

Under sub-item (b), entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 6 of document A/55/582/Add.2.

Under sub-item (c), entitled "Water supply and sanitation", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft decision in paragraph 3 of document A/55/582/Add.3.

Under sub-item (d), entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", the Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions, in paragraph 13 of document A/55/582/Add.4.

Under sub-item (e), entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 8 of document A/55/582/Add.5.

Under sub-item (f), entitled "Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft resolution in paragraph 6 of document A/55/582/Add.6.

Under sub-item (g), entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind", the Committee recommends the adoption of the draft decision in paragraph 7 of document A/55/582/Add.7.

Under item 96 of the agenda, entitled "Operational activities for development", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of one draft decision, in paragraph 7 of document A/55/583.

Under agenda item 97, entitled "Training and research", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of three draft resolutions in paragraph 18 of document A/55/584.

Under agenda item 98, entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution in paragraph 11 of document A/55/585.

Under agenda item 99, entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution in paragraph 9 of document A/55/586 and Corr.1

Under agenda item 100, entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions in paragraph 14 of document A/55/587, and the adoption

of one draft decision in paragraph 15 of the same document.

Under agenda item 101, entitled "High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution in paragraph 9 of document A/55/588, and the adoption of one draft decision in paragraph 10 of the same document.

Under agenda item 102, entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries", the Second Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution in paragraph 11 of document A/55/589.

In concluding, allow me to thank most sincerely the Chairman and Vice-Chairpersons of the Second Committee for the efforts they made to conduct the debate in an atmosphere of consensus and conviviality. I would also like to thank the Secretariat heartily for the assistance it gave me in carrying out my duties as Rapporteur of the Second Committee.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Second Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Second Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Second Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Second Committee. This means that where a recorded vote was taken, we will do the same, unless the Secretariat has been notified otherwise in advance.

I would also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote the recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Second Committee.

Agenda item 92

Macroeconomic policy questions

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/579)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/55/579?

It was so decided.

(a) Trade and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/579/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 11 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 12 of the same report.

The Assembly will turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/181).

Draft resolution II is entitled "International trade and development". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/182).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision, entitled "Documents relating to trade and development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

(b) Commodities

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/579/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The draft resolution was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/183).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

(c) External debt crisis and development

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/579/Add.3)

The President: I call on the representative of Ireland on a point of order.

Ms. Barrington (Ireland): I am taking the floor to make some corrections with regard to the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the General Assembly in paragraph 7 of document A/55/579/Add.3, submitted under sub-item (c) of agenda item 92, entitled "Macroeconomic policy questions: External debt crisis and development". The Rapporteur has already taken on board a number of agreed corrections to the text of that draft resolution, which is before the Assembly. I would like, from the floor, to add some additional corrections to the text.

The first correction should be made in the second line of the twelfth preambular paragraph. The words "which have cancelled" should be deleted and replaced with the words "through the cancellation of".

The second correction should be made in the fourth line of the thirteenth preambular paragraph. The words "with regard to the evaluation of performance" should be deleted and replaced with the words "on track record".

The third correction should be made in the fifth line of operative paragraph 6. The words "*inter alia*" should be deleted and replaced with the word "including".

The fourth correction should be made in the second line of operative paragraph 13. The word "including" should be inserted after the comma following the words "Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative".

The fifth correction should be made in the third line of operative paragraph 25. The words "among them" should be deleted and replaced with the word "countries".

The last correction should be made in the penultimate line of operative paragraph 28. After the word "including" a comma and the words "*inter alia*" should be inserted.

The President: The remarks made by the representative of Ireland are duly noted.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report, as orally corrected. The draft resolution, entitled "Enhancing international cooperation towards a durable solution to the external debt problem of developing countries", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution, as orally corrected?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/184).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

(d) Science and technology for development

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/579/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of the same report.

The Assembly will turn first to the draft resolution, entitled "Strengthening the coordination of the mechanisms on the Commission for Science and Technology for Development: promoting complementarity of activities in the area of new and innovative technologies within the United Nations system". The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/185).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision, entitled "Document relating to science and technology for development". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

(e) Financing of development, including net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/579/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended in paragraph 8 of the report of the Second Committee.

I call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to make a statement in explanation of vote or position before the Assembly takes a decision on the draft resolution.

Mr. Carp (United States of America): The United States joined consensus on this draft resolution because we feel that, through negotiations, we were able to reach understanding with other Member States on a number of issues that are of fundamental importance to us. This draft resolution points out that stable and accountable governance is essential for economic development, and it recognizes the importance of private capital, particularly foreign direct investment, in development financing.

But most important, it acknowledges the independent mandates of the Bretton Woods institutions. That is a critical issue for us because, very frankly, we were unable to join consensus on the draft resolution on this item last year primarily due to concerns that the draft resolution sought to impose prescriptions on the international financial institutions in a way that interfered with their autonomy in organization, operation and decision-making.

After lengthy and frank negotiations, we believe that this year's draft resolution shows clear acceptance of the division of labour between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. The United Nations, as a political organization of the international community, represents the political views of its Members. The Bretton Woods institutions, as separate financial institutions with their own charters and mandates, enjoy organizational and decision-making independence in dealing with world financial matters.

We believe it is essential that the full independence of the international financial institutions be completely respected and upheld, especially in a number of areas mentioned in the draft resolution. These include, but are not limited to, such areas of concern as the suggestion of regulatory frameworks for short-term capital flows and trade in currencies, as well as the consideration of the consolidation of a broader global agenda regarding the international financial system. In addition, we believe that it is critical that regional cooperation should support, not supplant, the global efforts of the international financial institutions.

The international community recognizes the need to strengthen the international financial system. Experience has shown that international financial institutions are the most effective actors to help achieve that goal. Their independence, as well as their technical expertise and focus, are crucial to their credibility, and therefore to the success of their work. We fully expect that the international community will do everything it can to protect this credibility.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The draft resolution is entitled "Towards a strengthened and stable international financial architecture responsive to the priorities of growth and development, especially in developing countries, and to the promotion of economic and social equity".

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/186).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 92?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 92 as a whole.

Agenda item 93

Sectoral policy questions

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/580)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Industrial development cooperation".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/187).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Preventing and combating corrupt practices and illegal transfer of funds and repatriation of such funds to the countries of origin". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/188).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 93?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 94

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

Reports of the Second Committee (A/55/581 and Add.6)

The President: We turn first to the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/55/581. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/55/581?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 5 of its report contained in document A/55/581/Add.6.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Status of preparation for the International Year of Mountains, 2002". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/189).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 94.

Agenda item 94 (*continued*)

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(a) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/581/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution A/55/190).

The President: May I take it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 94?

It was so decided.

(b) Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/581/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/191).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 94?

It was so decided.

(c) Cultural development

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/581/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Culture and development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/192).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 94?

It was so decided.

(d) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/581/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/193).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 94.

(e) Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/581/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 13 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Scope to be covered by the special session of the General Assembly on the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/194).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/195).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 94.

Agenda item 95

Environment and sustainable development

Reports of the Second Committee (A/55/582 and Add.8)

The President: We turn first to the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/55/582. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/55/582?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to the three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 16 of its report contained in document A/55/582/Add.8).

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "International Year of Freshwater, 2003". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/196).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/197).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution III, entitled "Enhancing complementaries among international instruments related to environment and sustainable development". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 55/198).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 95.

Agenda item 95 (*continued*)

Environment and sustainable development

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.1)

The President: I call on the representative of Pakistan on a point of order.

Mr. Hanif (Pakistan): I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to page 9 of document A/55/582/Add.1. In operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution I, the word "review" should be replaced by the word "Summit". The amended paragraph would

read "also decides to call the Summit the World Summit on Sustainable Development". That is how the document was adopted in the Second Committee.

The President: The remarks of the representative of Pakistan have been noted.

I give the floor to the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken.

Mr. Carp (United States of America): We wish at this time to reiterate our objection to the global conference package contained in the draft resolution entitled "Ten-year review of progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development". We fully understand the viewpoint that "Rio + ten" should be held as a global conference and that it should be held outside New York. The United States strongly supports a 10-year review that takes into consideration major changes since the Rio Conference and that advances those areas of Agenda 21 where progress has been slow.

However, in the light of more general United States policy relating to United Nations matters, the United States must dissociate itself from consensus on this matter. We note that the United States would be unable to pay its share of United Nations funding for such a conference if current United States legislation were renewed, and as a result United States policy is not to support the convening of a new global conference in the United Nations system.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Ten-year review of progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution I as orally corrected?

Draft resolution I, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 55/199).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its sixth special session. The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/200).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

(b) Convention on Biological Diversity

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/201).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

(c) Water supply and sanitation

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 3 of its report.

The draft decision is entitled "Note by the Secretary-General on progress made in providing safe water supply and sanitation for all during the 1990s". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

(d) Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 13 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/202).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/203).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda 95?

It was so decided.

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification of Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (55/204).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

(f) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.6)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "World Solar Programme 1996-2005". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/205).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

(g) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee
(A/55/582/Add.7)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft decision. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 95?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 95 as a whole.

Agenda item 96

Operational activities for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/583)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft decision is entitled "Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to conclude its consideration of agenda item 96?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 97

Training and research

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/584)

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to speak in explanation of action to be taken regarding the report of the Second Committee (A/55/584) on agenda item 97, entitled "Training and research".

I wish to refer to draft resolution III, entitled "United Nations Institute for Training and Research" (UNITAR), in particular operative paragraph 13 thereof, as recommended by the Second Committee.

The understanding of the Group of 77 during the negotiations was that the reclassification of the rental rates and maintenance costs sought in paragraph 13 for UNITAR would somewhat improve the current financial status of the Institute, at least in the short term, until the issue of rent and maintenance costs paid by UNITAR can be reviewed next year.

Indeed, as operative paragraphs 7 and 8, as well as preambular paragraph 7, made clear, the need for such review has become obvious and necessary, not only to ensure that UNITAR enjoys parity of treatment with similar United Nations institutions, but also to establish the fact that the poor state of its General Fund is a huge but avoidable impediment to UNITAR's delivery of its training programme, free of charge to all Member States, both developed and developing.

It is in this context that the oral statement of the Secretariat made during the Committee's adoption of its recommended draft resolution III came as a surprise to us all. As may be recalled, that oral statement said, among other things, that

> "the Secretary-General does not have the discretionary authority to waive the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 and hence is not in a position to reclassify the rates charged to UNITAR for rent and maintenance costs, unless the General Assembly decides to make an express exception to its resolution 41/213 in regard to recommendation 36".

Indeed, the poor financial situation of UNITAR deserves a remedy, which the General Assembly can provide.

We are keen, however, not to delay or postpone the adoption of draft resolution III by the General Assembly. We are therefore willing to go along with action on the draft, on the understanding that no action will be taken either on its operative paragraph 13 or on the oral statement of the Secretariat referred to. We believe that maintaining the current status quo until the fifty-sixth session through such a course of action will provide all parties an opportunity to discern and design a meaningful solution to the problem of UNITAR. On that understanding, the Group of 77 and China are willing to proceed with the consensus on the draft resolution.

I would request, however, that this statement be reflected in the official records of the General Assembly.

Mr. Le Gargasson (France) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the European Union, I would like to express our support for the statement just made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We share the concern of the Group of 77 on the problem of the rental rates charged to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

We had endorsed paragraph 13 of draft resolution III because we felt that it gave the Secretary-General a certain leeway to re-evaluate the rental rates charged to UNITAR. In this context, we were disappointed by the statement of the Secretariat explaining that this paragraph will have no practical implications. We, like the Group of 77, not wishing to delay the work of the Second Committee, agreed to join in the consensus on the draft resolution in its present form, but we hope that the General Assembly will find a more satisfactory and durable solution to this problem next year.

Like the Group of 77, we wish this statement to be reflected in the records of this meeting.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 18 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "United Nations University".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/206).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/207).

The President: Draft resolution III, entitled "United Nations Institute for Training and Research", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 55/208).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 97.

Agenda item 98

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/585)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 11 of its report.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine,

United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Fiji, Marshall Islands, Nauru.

The draft resolution was adopted by 147 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions (resolution 55/209).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Cameroon informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 98?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 99

Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/586 and Corr.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

The draft resolution, entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), including the initiative to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/210).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 100

Globalization and interdependence

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/587)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 14 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 15 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization".

Draft resolution I was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/211).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/212).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision entitled "Report of the high-level panel of experts on information and communication technology".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 101

High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/588)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 10 of the same report.

The Assembly will turn first to the draft resolution, entitled "Preparations for the substantive preparatory process and the high-level international intergovernmental event". The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/213).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision, entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on the high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 101?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 102

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/589)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 11 of its report. The Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/214).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude this stage of its consideration of agenda item 102?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Second Committee (A/55/590)

The President: I invite the attention of members to the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 12, which concerns the report of the Economic and Social Council.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft decisions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

Draft decision I is entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision I?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Documents relating to the report of the Economic and Social Council". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision II?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft decision III, entitled "Biennial programme of work of the Second Committee 2001-2002". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council allocated to the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Second Committee.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Reports of the Economic and Social Council
(A/55/3 and Add.1 and 2)

The President: Members will recall that chapters I to VI, sections A to C of chapter VII, and chapters VIII and IX of the report of the Economic and Social Council were assigned to plenary meetings. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of those chapters and sections of the report?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of those chapters and sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were assigned to plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 12?

It was so decided.

The President: I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic on a point of order.

Mr. A'Ala (Syrian Arab Republic) *(spoke in Arabic)*: My delegation has asked to speak on a point of order to request appropriate security conditions in this Hall so that draft resolutions can be adopted with safety. It is not acceptable for the work of the General Assembly to be interrupted when it is in the process of approving draft resolutions of the Second Committee, as happened today.

My delegation would like to express its consternation and anger in the light of the events that occurred here today.

How is it possible that these people could penetrate into the Hall of the General Assembly, and that they were allowed to threaten the safety of the delegations present here? I would like that the Security Service be questioned on this issue.

The President: I will take note of the remark made by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.88

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

88th plenary meeting
Thursday, 21 December 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 173 (*continued*)

Towards global partnerships

Draft resolution (A/55/L.71)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on this item at its 45th plenary meeting, on 31 October 2000.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.71.

Before action is taken on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since its publication the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.71: Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Hungary, Japan, Kenya, Lithuania, Namibia, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovenia and South Africa.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.71?

Draft resolution A/55/L.71 was adopted (resolution 55/215).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 173?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 30 (*continued*)

Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review

Draft resolution (A/55/L.68)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on this item at its 57th plenary meeting, on 10 November 2000.

I now give the floor to the representative of Madagascar to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.68.

Mr. Bakoniarivo (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): The debate held on 10 November 2000 on agenda item 30 highlighted the fact that, although progress had been made since the Secretary-General's 1998 progress report on this item, several factors continue to hinder Africa's development. The situation is eloquently described in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/55/350.

Draft resolution A/55/L.68, which I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly on behalf of the members of the Group of African States and the sponsors, is designed to continue the high-priority attention being given to Africa until the continent achieves a level of growth conducive to sustainable development. In addition to the countries listed in A/55/L.68, India and Singapore have also joined the draft resolution as sponsors.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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In its preambular part, the draft resolution recalls that while the primary responsibility for the development of Africa remains with African countries, the support and assistance of the international community are essential to the continent's economic recovery.

While the General Assembly welcomes in the draft resolution international and bilateral efforts and initiatives on behalf of Africa, it also notes its grave concern at the limited progress, particularly with regard to poverty eradication. Despite considerable efforts made by African countries to establish an economic and political environment conducive to development, Africa continues to face serious problems as a result of, among other things, the debt burden, the drop in official development assistance, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other infections diseases, and its diminished share of world trade.

In the draft resolution the Assembly also urges the immediate implementation of debt relief programmes, particularly for heavily indebted poor countries. It also calls for Africa's full integration into the world economy, as well as for increased financial resources to the continent. The Assembly also calls for the entire international community, the Bretton Woods institutions in particular, to pursue with renewed vigour and as a matter of urgency the realization of the goals and objectives of the New Agenda.

The draft resolution also stresses the need to strengthen the coordinating mechanism to harmonize initiatives on behalf of Africa so as to make them more effective. In that connection, the draft resolution proposes the adoption by the United Nations of an integrated approach to Africa.

Finally, by this draft resolution the General Assembly would, in preparation for the final review and appraisal scheduled for 2002, stress the importance of a judicious and independent high-level evaluation of the New Agenda based on a set of performance indicators to measure the progress made.

Africa is again looking to the international community for solidarity in order to attain the objectives set forth in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa. The adoption of this draft resolution would certainly serve to encourage Africa to intensify its own efforts to enter successfully into the new millennium. It is now time for Africans to reap the fruits of their efforts and move from a still fragile state to more solid foundations so that they may have a more certain future.

In conclusion, we thank all the delegations that participated in the consultations on this draft resolution and those that joined the African countries as co-sponsors. The Group of African States and the co-sponsors of the draft resolution hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/55/L.68.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director of General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs): Before they take action on draft resolution A/55/L.68, I should like to inform members that, by operative paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit an independent and objective evaluation of the New Agenda to the General Assembly not later than 31 May 2002.

It is the intention of the Secretary-General to entrust the preparation of the evaluation to a team of experts, which would be composed of an eminent person to oversee the evaluation and of six high-level experts — three from donor countries, two from Africa and one from other developing countries. It is expected that the team of experts would carry out the evaluation during a period of five months and would travel to Africa, Asia, Europe and North America for consultations.

The preliminary cost of this task is estimated to amount to $360,000. Of this amount, $240,000 would be required in 2001 and $120,000 in 2002. It is considered that the amount of $240,000 needed for 2001 could be absorbed from the resources appropriated from the current biennium and that the amount of $120,000 required for 2002 would be reflected in the proposals for the biennium 2002-2003.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.68, entitled "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.68?

The resolution was adopted (resolution 55/216).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 30?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 50 (*continued*)

Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/55/37/Rev.1 and Corr.1)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 50 at its 47th and 48th plenary meetings on 1 November 2000.

I now give the floor to the representative of Madagascar to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1.

Mr. Bakoniarivo (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour, on behalf of the Group of African States and the sponsors, to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/55/L.37/Rev.1. The following countries have joined as cosponsors: Australia, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal. The draft resolution, entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable and sustainable development in Africa", falls under agenda item 50.

The debate we held on this item on 1 November led to a general recognition that the development of Africa depends, inter alia, on preventing conflicts. This concept is reflected in the preamble to the draft resolution, wherein the General Assembly would reaffirm the close linkage between peace, security and development and the need for a comprehensive implementation of the recommendations of the Secretary-General, contained in his report in document A/52/871.

The report of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa, contained in document A/55/45, pointed to the lack of political will as one of the major obstacles to the implementation of those recommendations. Thus, in the preamble to the draft resolution, the General Assembly would emphasize the need to strengthen further the political will that is indispensable for the successful implementation of the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the proposals of the Working Group.

Considering that the proposals made by the Working Group in paragraphs 25 to 57 of chapter IV its report would help to promote peace and development in Africa, the General Assembly, in operative paragraph 3, would encourage Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional institutions, within their respective mandates, to take necessary measures to fully implement the proposals made by the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group.

The General Assembly would also stress the role of the Security Council in ensuring a coordinated and integrated implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General in the areas of peace and security. It would request the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2001, to consider the proposals of the Working Group contained in chapter IV of its report.

With a view to enabling the Group to carry out its tasks under resolution 54/234, the Assembly would decide to extend the mandate of the Working Group until the fifty-sixth session, and would request the Secretary-General and the Working Group to submit progress reports to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

The Assembly is in a unique position to make the dream of peace and development come true for Africa. Our belief in that leads the African Group and the sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1 to hope that the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution by consensus in order to realize the commitment made in chapter VII of the Millennium Declaration.

I wish in conclusion to thank all delegations, in particular our development partners, for their valuable assistance in preparing this draft resolution, which is of paramount importance to Africa. We wish also to thank all the countries that have been kind enough to join in sponsoring the draft resolution.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1.

Before calling on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote or position, I remind delegations that explanations of vote

are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Snyder (United States of America): The United States participated in the discussions concerning the draft resolution entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" in a spirit of compromise. We would like to clarify our position on specific measures set out in the report of the General Assembly's Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on that topic (A/55/45). While we agree with many of the report's observations and proposed actions, we have reservations about some of its proposals.

First, we are convinced that aid under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative should not be wasted on States still engaged in conflicts.

Secondly, our position is that official bilateral debt relief should not be de-linked from the HIPC process of the international financial institutions, either unilaterally or through the Paris Club. That would reduce the leverage of the international financial institutions to encourage economic reform.

Thirdly, at present only the international financial institutions arbitrate the extent to which external debt is sustainable. We do not agree that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should be given a role in making that assessment.

Fourthly, United States Government policy opposes expanding HIPC debt relief to middle-income countries. That would have significant budget implications.

Finally, the United States has not agreed to the 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance.

Despite those concerns, the United States is willing to join consensus on this draft resolution.

The President: Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Ireland and Sweden have become sponsors of draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 55/217).

The President: Before calling on the representative of Japan, who wishes to speak in explanation of position, I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): My delegation did not join in sponsoring the draft resolution on causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, as it has a few problems with some paragraphs in the report of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on that issue, for the same reasons as relate to agenda item 30, "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review", and agenda item 27, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity".

Nevertheless, the Government of Japan continues to work to achieve tangible results in international efforts to bring about poverty eradication, economic growth, the integration of African economies into the world economy and human-resource development, based upon the Tokyo Agenda for Action, which was adopted at the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development. The Government of Japan wishes to call upon the international community and the United Nations to commit themselves to the further development of Africa.

The President: I should now like to make an announcement concerning the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa.

We have just adopted draft resolution A/55/L.37/Rev.1, and have thereby extended the mandate of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group until the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

In that regard, I have conducted intensive consultations, and it is now a great pleasure to announce, as already indicated to all regional groups on 4 December, my decision to appoint his Excellency Mr. Shamshad Ahmad, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, and to reappoint his Excellency Mr. Inocencio Arias, Permanent Representative of Spain, as the two Vice-Chairpersons of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the

Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa.

Mr. Rahmtalla (Sudan): I am taking the floor, Mr. President, to respond to your announcement in my capacity as coordinator of the African group of experts on economic matters — the Second Committee African representatives.

We are grateful to you for the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Pakistan and the reappointment of the Permanent Representative of Spain to chair the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the causes of conflict in Africa and also to take this opportunity to express our profound appreciation and gratitude to the Permanent Representative of Singapore, the outgoing co-Chairman.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 50.

Agenda item 27

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Draft resolution (A/55/L.67)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on this item at its 53rd plenary meeting, on 7 November 2000.

I give the floor to the representative of Togo to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.67.

Mr. Kpotsra (Togo) (*spoke in French*): Following the debate which the General Assembly held on 7 September on agenda item 27, which concerns cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), it is my honour to introduce, on behalf of the States members of the OAU, the draft resolution contained in document A/55/L.67.

In its preambular part, the draft refers to the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU and emphasizes the events that have occurred this year directed towards strengthening regional and international cooperation.

First, at the thirty-sixth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Lomé last July, a number of decisions were adopted that reflect the determination of the States of the continent to continue to promote peace, stability and sustainable development in Africa despite the enormous difficulties they are facing.

Also, at the Millennium Summit, more than 100 heads of State or Government reaffirmed the need to find appropriate solutions to the many challenges facing our world, and in particular the specific needs of Africa.

With regard to the particularly difficult situation of the African countries, which is characterized by a considerable lack of stability, a pronounced weakening of national economies and the ongoing deterioration of health conditions, the draft emphasizes the need for the OAU to continue to work, in partnership with the United Nations, to strengthen African capacities in the area of the maintenance of peace and to establish a foundation for sustainable development in Africa.

In its operative part, the draft resolution notes with satisfaction the level of cooperation between the two organizations and encourages the Secretary-General of the United Nations to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations Liaison Office in Addis Ababa. The Secretary-General is also invited to closely involve the OAU in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, especially those that relate to meeting the special needs of Africa.

Moreover, the Secretary-General is requested to take the necessary measures to implement the recommendations of the most recent annual meeting of the two organizations, in particular those relating to priority programmes of the OAU, as specified in section III of the report of the Secretary-General.

With regard to the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa, the text invites the United Nations to intensify its assistance to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in strengthening its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, and to continue to work to strengthen African capacities with regard to the maintenance of peace.

Concerning the socio-economic area, the draft resolution requests the competent United Nations agencies to include in their national, subregional and regional programmes activities to support African

countries in their efforts to enhance regional economic cooperation and integration.

The draft also calls upon the United Nations agencies to intensify the coordination of their regional programmes in Africa to ensure the effective harmonization of their programmes with those of the African regional and subregional economic organizations and contribute to creating a positive environment for economic development and investment. It calls upon the United Nations to actively support the efforts of the OAU to increase official development assistance. The draft also emphasizes that the question of African indebtedness should be given greater attention by the donor community.

Lastly, it reaffirms the need to provide additional assistance to the Organization of African Unity and to African States to enable them to cope with the problems of refugees, displaced persons and returnees.

Last-minute discussions, particularly among certain African delegations — unfortunately, I was unable to consult all African delegations; I hope that they will not take it amiss — held in a spirit of compromise, enabled us to agree, on behalf of the African States, to the proposed revision of paragraph 11. Paragraph 11 has been revised to read as follows:

(spoke in English)

> "*Calls upon* the United Nations to actively support the efforts of the Organization of African Unity in urging the donor community and, where appropriate, multilateral institutions to strive to meet the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance, to implement fully, speedily and effectively the enhanced programme of debt relief for the heavily indebted poor countries, and to achieve the goal of securing debt relief in a comprehensive and effective manner in favour of African countries through various national and international measures designed to make their debts sustainable in the long term".

(spoke in French)

The draft resolution, as revised and submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration, has the advantage of being more concise than last year's text and reflects the concerns of both the African States and Africa's partners, as the result of lengthy discussions with those partners.

Accordingly, I should like to express the sincere hope of the African States that the text will be adopted without a vote by the General Assembly.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.67, as orally revised.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.67, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/55/L.67, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 55/218).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 27?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.89

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

89th plenary meeting
Saturday, 23 December 2000, 12.20 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 12.20 p.m.

Agenda item 107 (*continued*)

Advancement of women

Report of the Third Committee (A/55/595)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/708)

The President: The Assembly will take action on draft resolution VI, recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 35 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution VI is contained in document A/55/708.

May I remind members that by paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the General Assembly agreed that, when the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, delegations should, as far as possible, explain their votes only once, that is either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless a delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee.

May I also remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on draft resolution VI, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Third Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

Draft resolution VI, entitled "The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women", was adopted by the Third Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution VI was adopted (resolution 55/219).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 107?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Third Committee.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 17 (f), 115, 116, 116 and 120, 116 and 123, 117, 118, 121, 122, 124, 125, 127, 128, 133, 134, 153 (a), 169 and 176.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Eduardo Manuel da Fonseca Fernandes Ramos of Portugal, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

01-20031 (E)

Mr. Ramos (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee prepared during the main part of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Regarding agenda item 17 (f), entitled "Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/699. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the appointment of eight persons as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001.

In connection with agenda items 107 — consideration of which the Assembly has just concluded — and 117, entitled "Advancement of women" and "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001" respectively, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/708, which concerns the programme budget implications of draft resolution VI recommended by the Third Committee in paragraph 35 of its report contained in document A/55/595 and adopted by the Assembly as resolution 55/219. Paragraph 3 of the report of the Fifth Committee sets out the decisions taken by the Committee by its draft decision A/C.5/55/L.27, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 115, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/689. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda items 116 and 120, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations" and "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency" respectively, as they relate to the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on its activities during the fifty-fourth session, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/706. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda items 116 and 123, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations" and "Human resources management" respectively, as they relate to the proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission, and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General, the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/690. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 121, entitled "Pattern of conferences", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/702. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 124, entitled "United Nations common system", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/709. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 125, entitled "United Nations pension system", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/703. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 127, entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/691. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 128, entitled "Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide

and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/692. In paragraph 7 of its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 133, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/663. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 134, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/664. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning the question of a review of the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States, under agenda item 153 (a), entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in documents A/55/534 and A/55/534/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/55/534, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote. Under the same agenda item, the Committee also considered reform of the procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment. In that connection, the Chairman of the Committee proposed a draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote and which in paragraph 4 of its report contained in document A/55/534/Add.1 it recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

Regarding the question of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, under agenda item 116, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/532. In its report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, that was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under the same agenda item, in its report contained in document A/55/532/Add.1 the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution I, which concerns the question of results-based budgeting; draft resolution II, regarding outsourcing practices; and draft resolution III, which deals with the proposed programme budget outline for the 2002-2003 biennium; as well as draft decision I; draft decision II, which deals with the programme of work of the Fifth Committee for the biennium 2001-2002; and draft decision III, which deals with action taken on certain items. The Committee adopted these three draft resolutions and three draft decisions without a vote.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to a change to be made to draft decision III. Agenda item 169, which is found just before the end of the draft decision, should be deleted.

Concerning agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/710. In that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 122, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/521/Add.1. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

In relation to agenda item 169, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/712. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution I, which the Committee adopted without a vote, and draft resolution II, on voluntary movements in connection with the apportionment of expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

With regard to agenda item 176, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/711. In its report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that the Committee adopted without a vote.

Finally, with regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/713. In that connection, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions and two draft decisions. Draft resolution I deals with questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Draft resolution II deals with the revised budget appropriations for the biennium 2000-2001, the revised income estimates for the biennium 2000-2001 and the financing of the appropriations for the year 2001. Draft decision I deals with the revised estimates of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2000 substantive session, and draft decision II deals with the critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Fifth Committee recommended the two draft resolutions and the two draft decisions to the General Assembly for adoption without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in the Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise.

Agenda item 115

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/689)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/220).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 115.

Agenda items 116 and 120

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/706)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency", without a

vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 120.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*) **and agenda item 123**

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/690)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/221).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 123.

Agenda item 121

Pattern of conferences

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/702)

The President: The Assembly will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Nakkari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on the draft resolution submitted under agenda item 121, entitled "Pattern of conferences". However, we would first like to extend our thanks to the representative of Botswana, the Vice-Chairman who acted as coordinator of the consultations that led to consensus on this item.

My comments focus on two points. The first point deals with paragraph 4 of part II of the draft resolution and concerns the use of conference resources and facilities. That paragraph indicates that we must include all the resources needed in the budget for the biennium 2002-2003 in order to provide interpretation for regional meetings. It is our hope that this commitment will be fully understood and fulfilled. As for the phrase "in accordance with established practice", we hope that such a specification will not reduce the resources available for regional meetings.

My second point relates to paragraph 15 of part III. In that paragraph, the General Assembly welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General regarding the backlog in the publication of the *Repertoire* of the Security Council and asks him to publish current and future issues of the *Repertoire* in all six official languages. Our understanding of this paragraph is that from now on all documents will be published simultaneously in all six languages and that documents should not be published in one language and not the others. We hope that this reference document will be issued in the six official languages of the United Nations.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/222).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 124

United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/709)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/223).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 125

United Nations pension system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/703)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/224).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 125?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 17 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/699)

The President: The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 5 of its report that the General Assembly appoint the following persons as members or alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001: Mr. Kenshiro Akimoto (Japan), Ms. Valeria María González Posse (Argentina), Mr. M. Riaz Hamidullah (Bangladesh), Mr. Gerhard Kuntzle (Germany), Mr. Lovemore Mazemo (Zimbabwe), Ms. Susan M. McLurg (United States of America), Mr. Philip Richard Okanda Owade (Kenya) and Mr. Victor V. Vislykh (Russian Federation).

May I take it that the General Assembly appoints these persons?

It was so decided.

The President: I wish to inform members that, pursuant to resolution 55/224, just adopted by the Assembly under agenda item 125, the persons just appointed to the United Nations Staff Pension Committee will serve a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2001.

Agenda item 127

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/691)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/225).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 127.

Agenda item 128

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/692)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/226).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda item 133

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/663)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/227).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 134

Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/664)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/228).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 153

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/534 and Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of document A/55/534.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Review of the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/229).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of document A/55/534/Add.1.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Reform of the procedure for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/532 and Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of document A/55/532.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/230).

The President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 16 of document A/55/532/Add.1 and on the three draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 17 of the same document.

The General Assembly will first turn to draft resolution I, entitled "Results-based budgeting". The text of draft resolution I is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.19.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/231).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Outsourcing practices", the text of which is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.20.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/232).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2002-2003". The text of draft resolution III is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.25.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 55/233).

The President: The General Assembly will now turn to draft decision I, entitled "Investigation into the misdirection of contributions made by Member States to the United Nations Environment Programme Trust Fund account".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Biennial programme of work of the Fifth Committee for 2001-2002". The text of draft decision II is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.33.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: Draft decision III is entitled "Action taken on certain items". The text of draft decision III is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.34.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/710)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.18.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/234).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/521/Add.1)

The President: I call on the representative of France, speaking on behalf of the European Union, for an explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I note from the Secretary-General's smile that he is particularly pleased that we are discussing this item on our agenda. We, too, are pleased. We have left the conference room used by the Fifth Committee, which through long nights gradually became a souk, then a dormitory and eventually a torture chamber. Exhausted, but relieved and happy, we have now arrived here.

If we have been able safely to reach this solemn Hall with a great success to our credit, it is thanks above all to Gert Rosenthal. I wish to pay a solemn tribute to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. His two coordinators, Ambassador Abelian and our friend Frank Smith, have also earned our thanks, as has the Secretariat as a whole, which, through all these days and nights, has done a truly fantastic job.

The member countries of the European Union wish to offer their heartfelt gratitude and a fraternal salute to the Ambassador of Nigeria, who led the work of the Group of 77 and China with competence, authority and great talent, for which I highly commend him. We set out from positions that were often very far apart and we managed to find common ground on the two scales that we will shortly be adopting. I wish to include the Ambassador of Colombia in these words of thanks. He turned our studious weekends into times of intellectual pleasure in the conference room, which we feel has now become one of New York's most select clubs.

The Millennium Summit — the greatest Summit ever assembled — gave new impetus to our Organization. Today, we can perpetuate that impetus by placing the United Nations on a solid footing. The Brahimi report will be implemented, ensuring better management of peacekeeping operations. Today, we will be taking a decision on both scales, notably that for peacekeeping operations, which has undergone fundamental reform — the first, in fact, in 27 years.

We have succeeded because we did not know that success was impossible. This great success story is a collective one and the member States of the European Union wish to convey our gratitude to all delegations. On behalf of the European Union, I urge that we now fully implement the decisions taken, in particular section B of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/55/L.36 on the regular budget. For us, section B is an essential part of the draft resolution. It establishes the precise terms of an alternative to be fully implemented in accordance with the various terms it establishes.

More than ever before, the European Union is resolved to provide its decisive support to help us attain our common aspiration: the practical, daily implementation of the ideals of the United Nations Charter.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The text of the draft resolution is contained, for the time being, in document A/C.5/55/L.36.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/5 B).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): As one of the major contributors to the regular budget of the United Nations, Brazil participated in the negotiations on the scale of assessments in the spirit of flexibility, fully aware of their importance to the future of this Organization. We are facing extraordinary challenges and we all feel that the task has been accomplished.

As is widely and clearly known, Brazil faces at this time a very special situation that derives from distortions in the conversion of our economic data. This kind of situation has been foreseen in previous resolutions on the scale calling for the correction of excessive distortions in the income of States Members. These distortions result in an important artificial increase in the Brazilian assessment rate. We regret that there has not been the necessary political will to fully address this serious imbalance.

While we recognize the important efforts made towards its alleviation, the result still leads to Brazil's being assessed substantially above its real participation in the world's output. It is also unfair that a disproportionate increase in the Brazilian quota will serve to compensate a decrease or to alleviate an increase of the contributions of highly developed countries to the United Nations budget. Indeed, these negotiations have disregarded the established principle requiring that the financial burden be shared in ways that take into account the difference between developed and developing countries. Such imbalance will create serious and unforeseen budgetary constraints for Brazil. That is why we are not in a position to fully endorse such an outcome. However, we have always participated constructively in this Organization and upheld its values and rules, among them the principle that diplomatic negotiations with a sense of fairness and balance are the bedrock of a strong United Nations.

Bearing in mind the overriding objective that we share of creating the conditions for a much-needed reform of the United Nations, we did not object to the adoption of the resolution without a vote. We hope that this enormous effort to approve the new scales will open a new phase in our permanent endeavour to strengthen the Organization and make its organs more representative and accountable, thereby increasing the legitimacy, authority and effectiveness of their actions.

Finally, I would like to refer to the excellent work of the coordinators, and especially to the great diplomatic qualities of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal. His wisdom and patience were decisive in achieving a successful outcome of our deliberations.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): It has been a long, hard day. I do not recall the last time I spent more than 26 consecutive hours confined in this building. This was a negotiating process that was exhausting and, to some extent, uncomfortable for all delegations. Although we reached a consensus — and consensus is always a reason for satisfaction, because it means agreement has emerged among countries that start with different points of view — it is not a consensus that I would like to celebrate as I might others. For my country, Chile, the result of the exercise will mean a considerable increase in its assessment — a result that could in itself have been sufficient reason not to join the consensus. Yet we believe, as do most, if not all, Member States, that we need to look beyond the peculiar reasons that sometimes motivate countries to challenge their commitments to an institution and — in this case — consider the financial stability and the future of the United Nations, so that it can function in a way that will facilitate agreement and enable the obligations of its Members to be fulfilled.

I join others in expressing the hope that we can now leave behind us this subject that has unsettled relations between States and begin a new era for our Organization, its Members and its main contributors. Perhaps this new era will not be limited to the resolution of financial problems, but will extend to interest in the noble tasks before the Organization, which also require the kind of leadership that has been shown in this case.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of New Zealand and of my own country in explanation of position following the adoption of resolution 55/5 B, on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations.

Our delegations welcome the adoption of this resolution by consensus. We recognize the difficult circumstances facing many delegations during these negotiations, including the pressures on developing countries, many of which are faced with steep increases between the scale periods. To help ease some of this pain, our delegations, like those of other countries, gave our full support to the phase-in arrangements which are referred to in paragraph 4 of the resolution. I think that colleagues will recognize that the delegations of Australia and New Zealand have always tried to be a voice of reason and practicality. We have also always tried hard, while defending our own national interests, to defend and protect the United Nations and its rules and reform processes. Colleagues will recall successive statements in both formal and informal meetings urging that in our push for agreement we not take bad

decisions, not retreat from reforms already agreed and not distort the scale methodology unduly and in ways which could create problems in the future.

We are pleased with the level of accommodation to competing interests that this scale has been able to achieve without unduly compromising the integrity of the scale methodology. To the extent possible, we have sought to spread the pain equitably, and we believe we have achieved this. We continue to believe, however, that a true reflection of capacity to pay is some way off. We should continue to strive to avoid methodological adjustments made in order to sidestep our basic responsibility as Member States to pay our fair share of United Nations costs.

By adopting this resolution, the General Assembly has decided to reduce the ceiling from 25 per cent to 22 per cent, thereby reducing the assessment of the major contributor by 3 per cent. The ceiling is a distortion of the principle of capacity to pay, and this reduction a further distortion of this important principle. Our opposition to the reduction of the ceiling was based on our commitment to this principle. The ceiling is a political rather than a technical element in the scale. However, we were willing to review the ceiling and we listened to the arguments on their merits. We joined consensus on the resolution, since granting a reduction was clearly the express wish of the membership as a whole, and it is not the practice of our two delegations to block consensus. We are pleased that, having taken this political decision, we have also taken the corresponding political decision to spread the costs of the reduction to the membership equitably.

It is the understanding of all delegations which participated in these scale negotiations that the reduction of the ceiling involved a bargain. In exchange for the reduction, the major contributor would pay its arrears. The membership of the Organization has acted. We call upon the major contributor to now fulfil its side of the bargain and to pay its arrears in full and without delay. We look forward to the speedy resolution of this issue so that the finances of the Organization can at last be placed on a sound footing. We also look forward to an improvement in the performance of all contributors, large and small, in paying their assessed contributions within the 30 days required by the United Nations financial regulations.

As a result of the decision we have just taken, our countries will face significant increases in our assessments. But, as has been the case in the past, our delegations remain committed to paying our assessments in full, on time and without conditions. We call on all others to do the same.

In conclusion, Australia and New Zealand wish to record formally our strong appreciation to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Rosenthal, and to the two coordinators, Ambassador Abelian of Armenia and Mr. Frank Smyth of Ireland, as well as to the Secretariat, for their dedication and patience in assisting Member States to bring these extremely difficult negotiations — which, I would like to recall, we started more than two years ago — to a satisfactory conclusion, and to achieve this historic agreement.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 122.

Agenda item 169

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/712)

The President: I call on the representative of the United Arab Emirates, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolutions contained in document A/55/712.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Given the problems and challenges of today's world, the United Arab Emirates is concerned about strengthening the role of the United Nations. We therefore support the relevant draft resolutions relating to the financing of peacekeeping operations. The increase in our country's assessments is very significant indeed. Not only is it inequitable, but it is not in keeping with numerous international norms and principles in the financial and administrative fields. This is especially relevant given that our national economy is based on a non-renewable resource, oil.

We are a developing country, and the demands of sustainable development continue to be very important as we try to strengthen the internal stability of our country. Despite these facts, given our awareness of the need to adopt resolutions by consensus on the

peacekeeping and regular budgets, we support the draft resolutions, even though they do not in reality reflect the concerns of numerous developing countries, in particular those that continue to experience major financial difficulties. However, this is a historic event in the history of this international Organization, especially given the difficult conditions being experienced by numerous peoples and countries throughout the world. In that context, we would like to reaffirm that the United Arab Emirates will remain aware of the need to increase its contributions to this international Organization and its specialized agencies, despite all the conditions and difficulties to which I have referred.

We have sent a letter to the Secretary-General with regard to the participation of our country in peacekeeping operations and to our contribution to the regular budget. Since 1998, we have continued to pay the same contribution, despite the enormous changes that have taken place in our country, including population growth, an increase in gross national product and a drop in individual per capita income, which today is about $14,460 per annum. We therefore hope that, when it considers the matter, the Committee on Contributions will take our situation into account in accordance with its modalities and procedures.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General, a happy new year, and we hope that peace, stability and happiness will embrace all humanity.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/235).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Voluntary movements in connection with the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/236).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 169.

Agenda item 176

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/711)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/237).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 176.

Agenda item 117

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/713)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 37 of its report and on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 38 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/238).

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/239).

The President: We turn now to draft decision I, entitled "Revised estimates of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2000".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women", without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

Programme of work

The President: With regard to the programme of work of the General Assembly, apart from organizational matters and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly and bearing in mind the action already taken by the Assembly thus far, I should like to propose that the following agenda items remain for consideration during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly: agenda items 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 26, 40 to 43, 45, 46, 48, 50, 59 to 64, 73, 84, 86, 94, 97, 102, 105, 112, 114 to 153, 164, 166 to 169, 175, 176, 178, 179, 181 and 182.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that those agenda items remain for consideration during the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly?

It was so decided.

Statement by the President

The President: It has been a very busy three and a half months for all of us, and I believe we should be quite satisfied with the results achieved. The Assembly has taken action on many important issues. I do not intend to go through all of them here. I will post a short summary on the work of the Committees and the plenary Assembly on my Web page for this purpose. For now, I would like to share some observations on the work done so far and thoughts on how we might want to go about our business next year.

The Millennium Summit was the seminal event of this session of the General Assembly and set the agenda for our work. The main challenge for the Millennium Assembly was how to implement the Summit Declaration.

In my view, the Declaration is one of the most important documents of recent times. If we are able to achieve its targets, it will have an enormous impact globally.

I am therefore very pleased that with the cooperation and support of all delegations we managed, in resolution 55/162, to establish a follow-up mechanism to the Millennium Summit as an integral part of the ongoing work of the United Nations.

It is also clear to me that in order to implement these goals the United Nations needs to open up. We need to enhance international cooperation, build bridges between societies and improve global governance. We need to reach out to other international and multilateral actors, such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and various regional organizations, as well as civil society as a whole. As I have stressed many times, the significance and relevance of the United Nations in the future will depend on our ability to involve our partners and civil society in our work.

In the past few weeks, two major items on the Assembly's agenda have dominated our discussions: what will the Assembly decide concerning the implementation of the Brahimi report, and will it agree to a new scale of assessments?

As far as the Brahimi report is concerned, the Secretary-General's initiative to convene a high-level panel, followed by the report presented by the panel, was welcome and timely. The report is a valuable

contribution to the efforts to strengthen one of the United Nations core functions: the maintenance of international peace and security.

As the President of the General Assembly, I encouraged the Assembly to consider this extensive report in a speedy manner, and together with Member States we managed to reach agreement in the very short time of one month. Given the complexity of this issue and the time pressure, I think we can be quite satisfied with the results. Much-needed additional resources will be made available to the Secretariat. However, work will have to continue in the new year, and I trust there is the political will to complete the effort.

During the past couple of weeks we had extremely difficult and complex negotiations on the scale of assessments. I myself made several appeals to delegations to come up with a substantive negotiated agreement — by consensus — on the two scales of assessment. That a compromise was finally reached shows that delegations put the interests of the Organization above everything else and understood the seriousness of the consequences to the Organization of a failure to reach consensus on this critical issue. I commend delegations for the outcome reached today.

Throughout this session an important concern of mine has been to find ways to improve the functioning of the General Assembly itself. I have tried to work in an open and transparent way with my colleagues and to foster a collaborative spirit. I have instituted some changes, such as amending the rules to establish the dates for the opening of the Assembly's session each year. I am looking at ways to streamline the Assembly's huge agenda, and I will be working on this and other proposals next year. In order to guide this process and to give it some focus I intend to convene an informal brainstorming session of the General Committee some time in February. I will also prepare a non-paper in connection with the above-mentioned brainstorming session. I believe that several small steps, when combined, can actually have a big impact.

Looking ahead to next year, we will have a full calendar of meetings and conferences. For my part, I will keep the momentum going through the special sessions of the General Assembly on human settlements and HIV/AIDS and the other activities of the General Assembly. Concerning the special session on HIV/AIDS, my office and I, with the help of two able facilitators, will have a central role in the preparatory process. I will also chair two working groups that will start meeting next year: on Security Council reform and concerning Africa's special needs.

One observation that I have made during my tenure — having come to the United Nations from the outside — has to do with the resources of the Organization. The United Nations is clearly underfunded and in desperate need of more adequate resources. Years of zero nominal growth have taken their toll. It is a policy that has clearly come to the end of its usefulness.

All in all, we have all worked hard, and I am sure you are looking forward to a well-deserved break. Before we take that break, let me say a word of thanks. First of all I should like to thank all Ambassadors and other representatives for their cooperation. Special thanks go to the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, as well as to the Chairpersons and Bureaux of the Main Committees and working groups — not least to Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, who chaired a historic session of the Fifth Committee — for their valuable cooperation and leadership in bringing our work to conclusion. They have shown that the Millennium Summit has indeed created a momentum and a new spirit of political will that will help us achieve the goals set in the Declaration. I trust that this kind of consensus-building and teamwork will help us resolve the challenges ahead.

I should also like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the Secretariat as a whole. In particular, I wish to thank the hard-working staff of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, under the able leadership of Under-Secretary-General Jin Yongjian. Special thanks go to the teams of Mr. Vadim Perfiliev and Mr. Ozdinch Mustafa, as well as to our interpreters, conference room officers and documentation officers. Without them, our meetings would not have been possible. My team and I are deeply grateful to all of them.

Finally, I wish to thank the media, which have followed our agenda this session. Through them, I hope, we have been able to convey a more open and more easily understandable picture of the work of the General Assembly to the general public.

I would like to wish you a very happy holiday, and I look forward to working with you in the new year.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.